

ROBERT D. KAPLAN ON THE ROOTS OF HENRY KISSINGER'S "REALISM"

The Atlantic Monthly

JUNE 1999

BUILDING WEALTH



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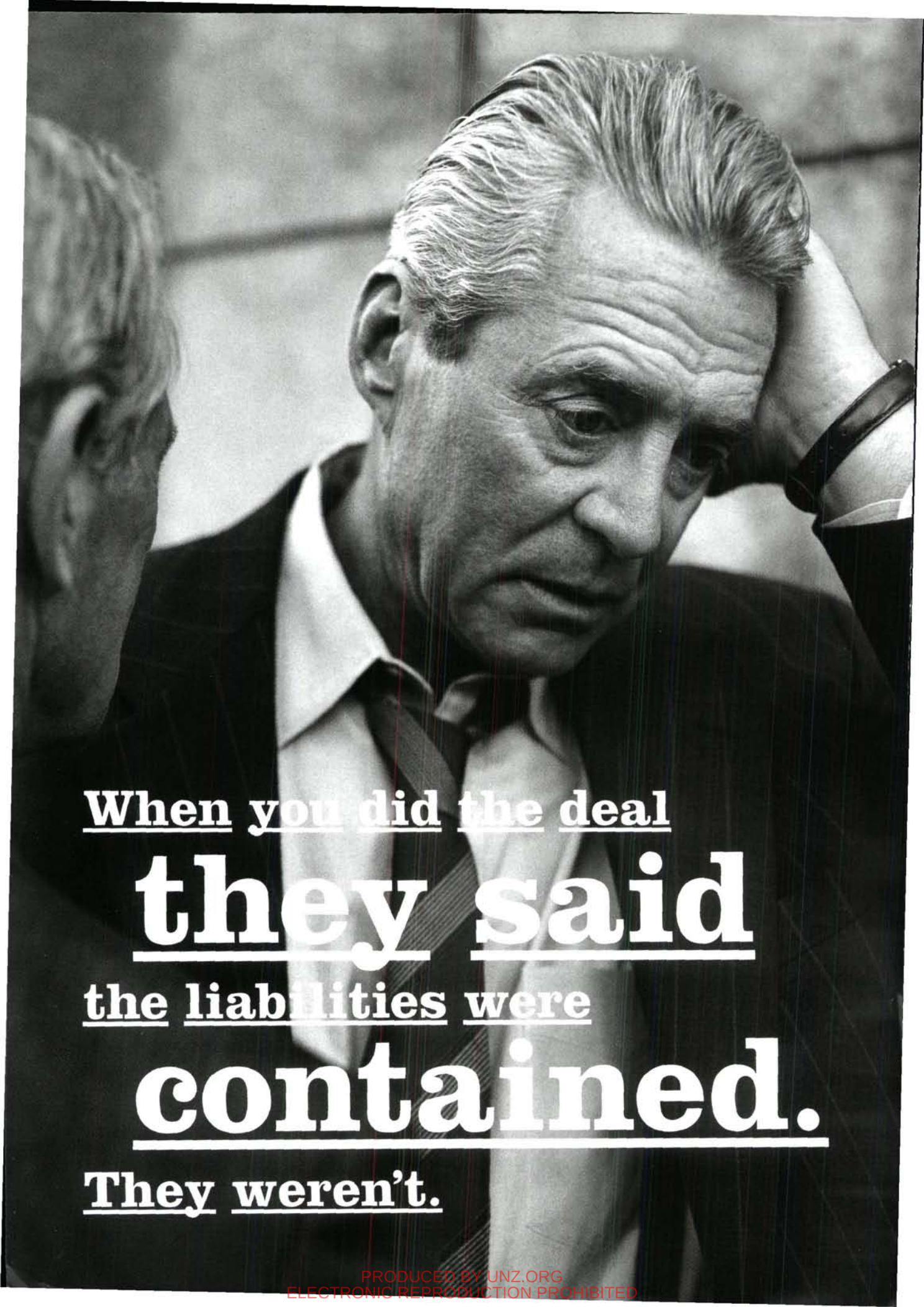
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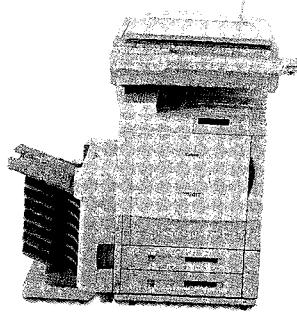
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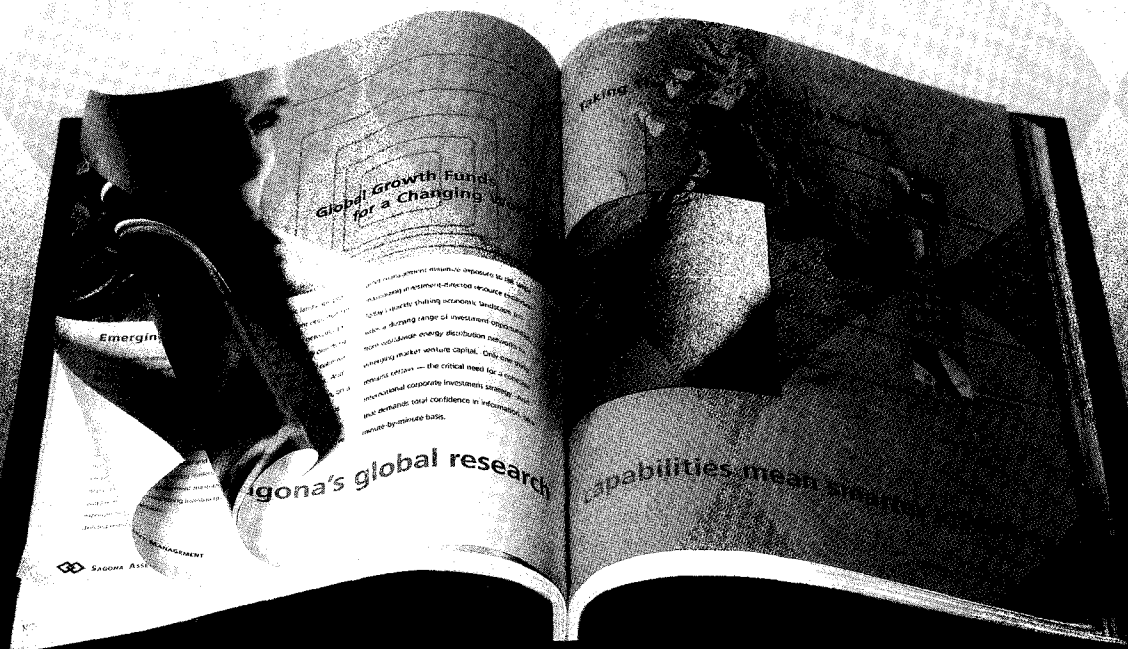
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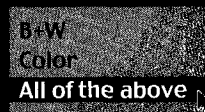
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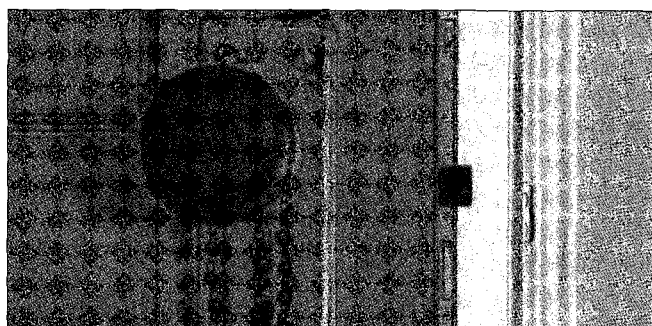


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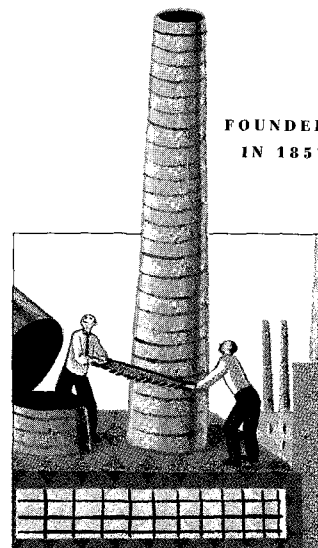
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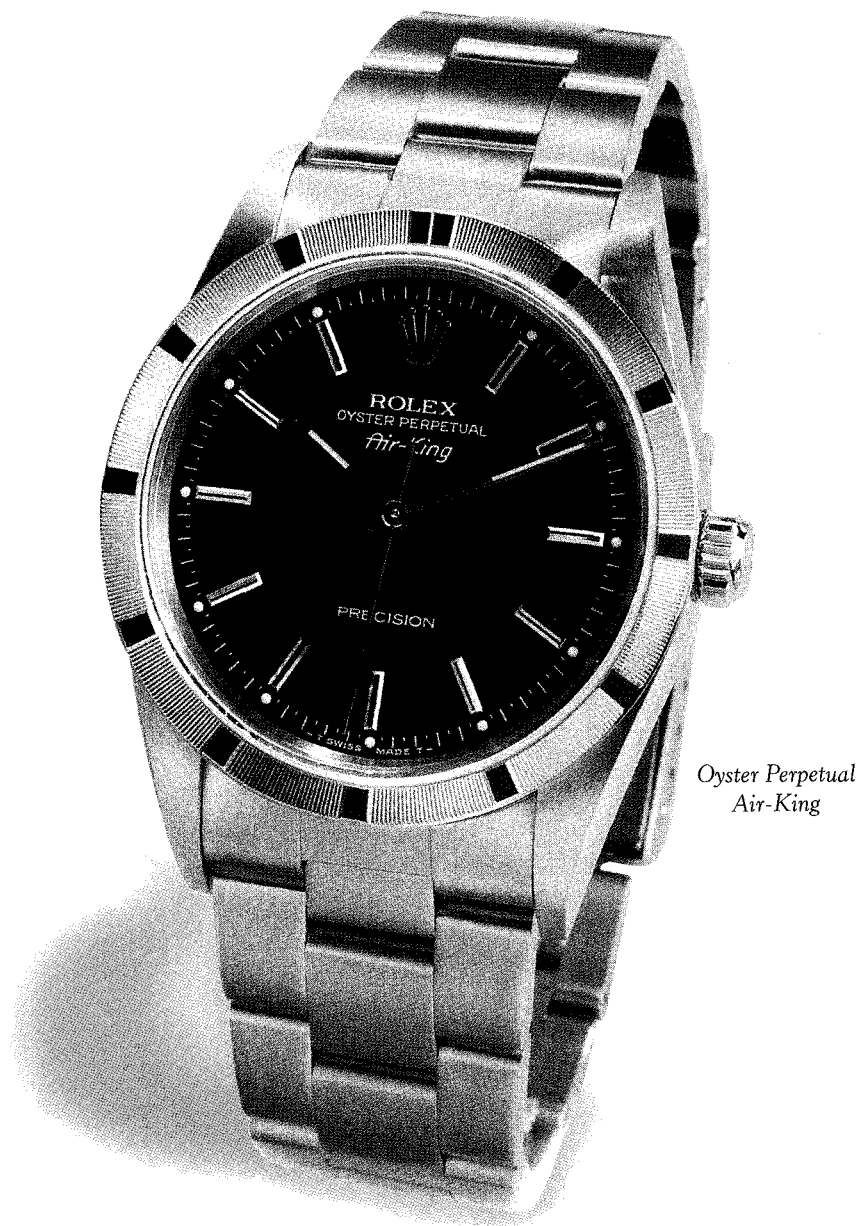
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77 NORTH WASHINGTON STREET

CONOR Cruise O'Brien, the author of the memoir "Two Deaths in Rathmines," in this issue, was born into Irish politics. His earliest memory, indeed, served as an apt prelude to his career as a political actor and writer. "The first sound I can remember is a series of booming noises, which woke me up," he wrote in *The Atlantic Monthly* in 1994. "The cause of the noises was the bombardment of the Four Courts, Dublin, beginning at 4:07 A.M. on Wednesday, June 28, 1922. I was then four and a half years old." These were the opening shots of the Irish civil war, fought over the constitutional status of Northern Ireland, which has been a preoccupation of O'Brien's throughout his adult life.

Since the current Irish "Troubles" began, more than thirty years ago, O'Brien has stood for the core principle of democracy: government by consent. He defends the right of the Protestant majority in Northern Ireland to choose to remain British citizens. Passionately, and at no little danger to his life, he has stood against the attempt of the Provisional Irish Republican Army to win by violence what it would never be able to

win by democratic means—an end to Northern Ireland's union with Britain. Confident that he is championing democracy against its enemies, O'Brien has fought the IRA as a minister in the government of the Republic of Ireland and as a gifted writer.

Turning against patriotic pieties as well as violence, O'Brien has for years argued that partition remains the best pragmatic and democratic dispensation in Ireland. Although last year's Good Friday agreement was welcomed by the British, Irish, and U.S. governments, O'Brien was critical of it. Apart from his hostility to terrorism, he has always maintained that a compromise acceptable both to Sinn Féin and to the Unionist majority is an illusion. The deadlocks this spring lend plausibility to his pessimism.

O'Brien's *Memoir: My Life and Themes* (from which "Two Deaths in Rathmines"

is drawn), recently published in Britain by Profile Books and awaiting an American publisher, began with pieces that O'Brien wrote for *The Atlantic* about his family and modern Irish history. It tells of one of the noteworthy lives of the century. —THE EDITORS



O'Brien, 1927 and six decades later

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Sasha Abramsky ("When They Get Out") grew up in London and lives in New York. His writing has appeared in *The Village Voice*, *New York*, and the *London Independent*.

Stephen Budiansky ("Politically Correct Planting") is a correspondent for *The Atlantic* and the author of *If a Lion Could Talk: Animal Intelligence and the Evolution of Consciousness* (1998).

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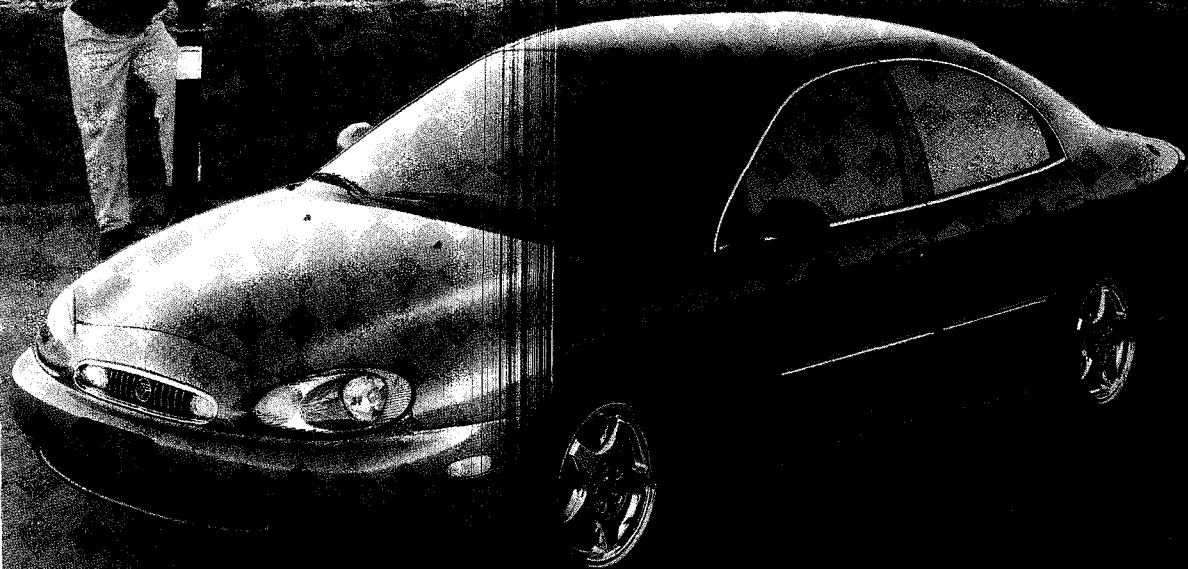
The New York Times and *Fast Company*. She illustrated the book *How to Make Your Man Behave in 21 Days or Less Using the Secrets of Professional Dog Trainers*, by Karen Salmansohn (1994).

Lester C. Thurow ("Building Wealth") is a professor of management and economics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. His article in this issue will appear in somewhat different form in his book *Building Wealth: New Rules for Individuals, Companies, and Nations in a Knowledge-Based Economy*, which is to be published by Harper Business this month.

Geoffrey Wheatcroft ("The Making of the English Middle Class") is an English journalist and author. His most recent book, *The Controversy of Zion: Jewish Nationalism, the Jewish State, and the Unresolved Jewish Dilemma* (1996), won a National Jewish Book Award.

C. K. Williams ("The Dress") teaches in the writing program at Princeton University. A new book of his poems, *Repair*, will be published this month.

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Racists, fascists, survivalists, supremacists. That pretty well sums up most peoples' impressions of who lives in the Idaho Panhandle. Fueled by media reports, fed by most news coverage, it makes for more compelling reading than the fact that probably 99% of the residents oppose these extremists.

Monitor readers got a clearer picture. Rather than dwell on the 92 neo-Nazis who marched down the streets of Coeur d'Alene, we also looked at the thousands who protested and the ongoing human rights efforts of local businesses and individuals.

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SERB DOUBTS

Living in cross hairs of NATO

by Justin Brown
Special to The Christian Science Monitor

BELGRADE, YUGOSLAVIA
WHEN an earthquake hit northern Serbia last week, the people of Belgrade thought it was the Big One — not a natural disaster, but the bomb attack NATO had been threatening after seven months of violence down in Kosovo.

I was in that southern province at the time, just a three-hour drive away, and my phone began to ring. One caller was Aca, my best friend in Belgrade. He was wise enough to know the difference between a tremor and a

Idaho Battles Image as Haven for Hate

A white-supremacist group marched here July 18. State has most hate groups per capita.

by Brad Knickerbocker
Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

COEUR D'ALENE, IDAHO— When someone says "Idaho," do you think: "First state with a Jewish governor; first state where a native American won statewide office; fourth state to allow women the right to vote; first state to pass the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA)?"

Or do you think: "Site of the shoot-out with white separatist Randy Weaver at Ruby Ridge; home of James 'Bo' Gritz, ex-Ku Klux Klan leader David Duke's running mate in the 1992 presidential race; place where former Los Angeles police detective Mark Fuhrman moved after the O.J. Simpson trial; one of the first states to rescind its



SIGNS OF TIMES? Human rights group turned out en masse to protest an Aryan Nation march in Coeur d'Alene. Idaho now has more than 100 groups promoting racial harmony.

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LETTERS

Victory at Sea

David M. Kennedy writes in "Victory at Sea" (March *Atlantic*) that even before the atomic bombs were dropped on Japan, "the moral rules . . . had long since been violently breached—in the Allied aerial attacks on European cities, and even more wantonly in the systematic firebombing of Japan." A cursory reading of the history of the Second World War reveals that long before our involvement, Germany methodically and repeatedly bombed civilian populations in London, and Japan routinely rounded up civilians in China and elsewhere for summary execution. I certainly regret that the United States and its allies were forced to destroy Dresden, Hamburg, and Tokyo, but such actions were facilitated and made necessary by the violent slaughter of millions of innocent people by the Germans and the Japanese. Any course other than bombing those cities would have left Germany and Japan time to murder countless more innocent people. I would argue that the United States re-established "the moral rules" by defeating in whatever manner necessary two of the most violent and sinister powers this world has ever known.

Brooke Lawson
Montgomery, Ala.

"Victory at Sea" was a pleasure to read, but it looks afresh at essentially only three items: the appalling weather-induced losses to North Atlantic convoys; Hitler's unbelievably poor strategic timing in declaring war on the United States; the nearly criminal ineptness of General Douglas MacArthur in failing to put all U.S. Philippine forces on full alert (including dispersal of aircraft) after the bombing of Pearl Harbor and Admiral King's stubborn refusal to institute a convoy system for coastal shipping.

Despite his superb summary of the code-breaking efforts that led to our ambush of the Japanese fleet at Midway, Kennedy does not mention the further

fruits of that decryption, which enabled us in April of 1943 to ambush and shoot down Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto, the prime architect of much of Japan's Pacific strategy.

Lee Gaillard
Philadelphia, Pa.

David Kennedy, in describing the "Bataan Death March," mentions some extenuating circumstances that might have produced the extreme brutality displayed by the Japanese toward their defenseless prisoners. One wonders what those circumstances might have been. As to "the pitiless inhumanity that came to possess both sides," is there a similar incident of American brutality toward Japanese prisoners of war available to historians?

Colleen M. Bryant
Fallbrook, Calif.

David Kennedy has it almost right when he states that MacArthur "speedily jettisoned his always dubious scheme" to repel the invading Japanese on the Philippine beaches in 1941 and to retreat to Bataan and Corregidor. The fact is that War Plan Orange II was designed to deny Manila Bay to the invader by holding Bataan and Corregidor with a well-armed, well-equipped, and well-supplied force until U.S. naval forces could relieve them. MacArthur violated Orange II when he insisted on keeping the supplies in the open city of Manila and issued his general orders to defend the beaches until death.

Before the war my father, an Army engineering officer, worked on and ultimately was in charge of building defense facilities on Bataan. In his memoirs he stated that when the war broke out, the docks, water supply, tactical roads, and 127 camouflaged ammunition and supply warehouses on Bataan were completed. Only the airfield was not fully ready. But the supply warehouses were empty, and that doomed the defenders to starvation and disease. The terrible physical

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condition of the troops is much of the reason that so many could not sustain the rigors of the Death March.

Early in the war my father, in a remarkably brave and daring effort, blew up the bridges and the oil-storage tanks behind the retreat to Bataan. For these actions he was awarded, of all things, a Purple Heart—a paperwork snafu, and typical of how wartime commanders, much like popular history, never seem to get it quite right.

Allen J. Manzano

Carlsbad, Calif.

Ever since Attila the Hun, armies have fought their enemies with far less than the slightest moral behavior, toward warrior or civilian. The Germans and the Japanese abandoned “the moral rules that had long stayed warriors’ hands from taking up weapons of mass destruction against civilian populations” from Day One of the war.

As a combat veteran of General Curtis LeMay’s 20th Air Force and a participant in the firebombing of numerous Japanese cities, I would want to be remembered as having helped to accelerate the end of the war. Our efforts contributed to the saving of thousands of Allied lives that would have been sacrificed with an invasion of Japan.

Robert Collin

Sonoma, Calif.

If we are to take lessons from history, it is worth adding a footnote to “Victory at Sea.” The subject is mine warfare. The United States made effective use of naval mines throughout the Pacific war, mines being the ideal weapon against a nation heavily reliant on maritime commerce. Six percent of the B-29 missions over Japan were actually devoted to mining, rather than bombing. At the end of the war Prince Konoye estimated that the economic effect of the mines was comparable to that of all the bombs dropped by the other 94 percent. The United States also suffered from mines. In 1942, for example, one U-boat laid a minefield off the Chesapeake Capes that sank several ships and temporarily halted coastal traffic entirely. Mine warfare is an inexpensive, unromantic method of sea denial that is highly effective against maritime nations such as the United States and Japan. That is as true today as it was in

the Second World War—our naval losses in Desert Storm were due to mines, not aircraft or cruise missiles.

Alan Washburn

Monterey, Calif.

The subtitle for David Kennedy’s article says, “The story of the American war is incomplete without the sweep and strategic stakes of the war at sea, in which 104,985 American sailors and Marines were wounded, 56,683 were killed, and more than 500 U.S. naval vessels were sunk. Lest we forget.”

Unfortunately, Kennedy has forgotten to include the U.S. Merchant Marine losses in his totals. The U.S. Merchant Marine suffered a greater percentage of war-related deaths than all other U.S. services: one out of every thirty-two mariners died in the line of duty, for a total of 6,830 deaths. Eleven thousand were wounded, 1,100 died of their wounds, and 604 were prisoners of war, of which sixty died. A total of 833 large ships were sunk, thirty-one of them vanishing without a trace.

These statistics were kept quiet during the war, in order to boost American morale, to keep mariners enlisting, and to withhold from the Axis powers information about their successes. These volunteers put their lives on the line to help win the war. Without their contribution we would never have won. Without them vital supplies of ammunition, food, gas, locomotives, oil, planes, and tanks would never have reached the Allied forces. Lest we forget!

Gerald Reminick

Brentwood, N.Y.

David M. Kennedy replies:

I thank the several correspondents who have added enriching detail to my account of America’s struggle at sea during the Second World War. Let me here add just a few clarifying points of my own.

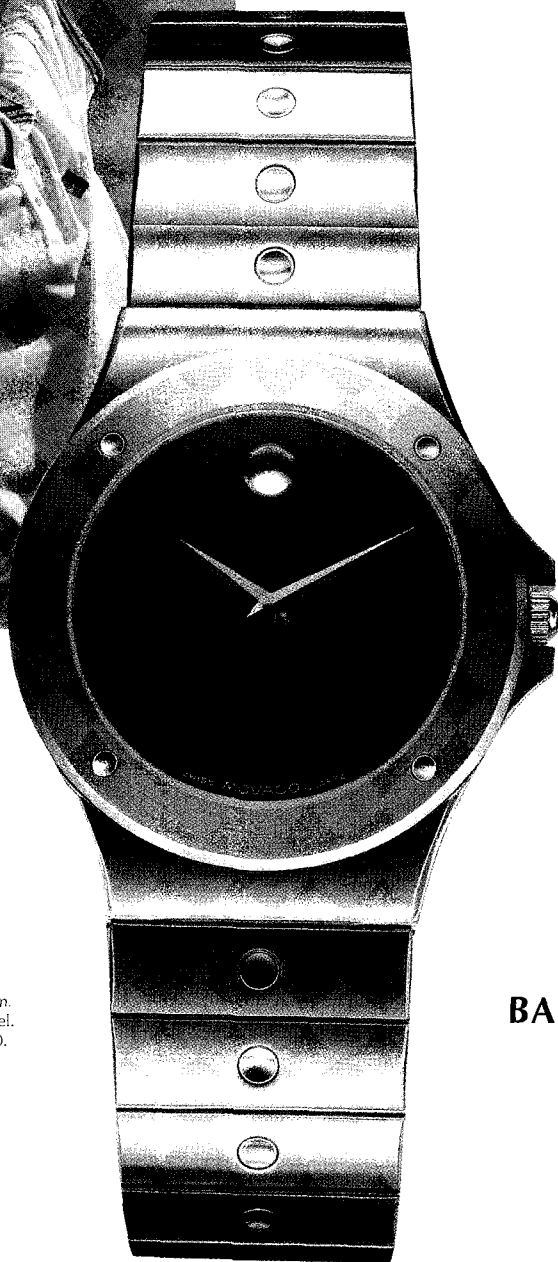
1. Of course, Brooke Lawson is correct that Japan and Germany initiated terror-bombing before the British and, later, the Americans responded in kind. I regret that the wording of my article gave the impression that I was ignorant of those well-known precedents. Readers of the book from which my *Atlantic* article was drawn, *Freedom From Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929–1945*, will find that matter treated fully on pages 401 (Nanking) and



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† The Standard & Poor's 500 Composite Stock Price Index is an unmanaged index of 500 common stocks and is a generally accepted measure of stock market performance. The S&P 500 had average annual total returns of +18.47%, +26.23% and +18.96% for the 1-, 5- and 10-years ended March 31, 1999, respectively.

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453 (the Battle of Britain). Yet the fact remains that well before Hiroshima and Nagasaki the Allies crossed the moral threshold that had earlier restrained them from the terror-bombing of civilians. In that sense the atomic bombs represented a technological innovation, to be sure, but hardly a moral one.

2. Lee Gaillard will find on page 563 of *Freedom From Fear* a full discussion of the role that the code breakers played in the downing of Admiral Yamamoto's plane.

3. Allen J. Manzano goes a long way toward answering Colleen M. Bryant's query about the "extenuating circumstances" of the Bataan Death March. As he notes, the American and Filipino captives were badly weakened by malnutrition and disease even before they fell into enemy hands. The Japanese were in similar shape, and had not anticipated taking so many prisoners so early in the campaign. In any case, I emphasized that these circumstances "were scarcely sufficient to exonerate the Japanese from the indictment that they behaved with wanton barbarity." And yes, there are regrettably similar incidents (though surely not comparable in scale) of American brutality toward Japanese prisoners. Ms. Bryant might want to look, for example, at E. B. Sledge's chillingly candid memoir, *With the Old Breed at Peleliu and Okinawa*, which proves that war is indeed hell and that the Japanese had no monopoly on devilry.

Prison-Industrial Complex

I enjoyed "The Prison-Industrial Complex," by Eric Schlosser (December *Atlantic*), but I was puzzled by his assertion that "the nation's private prisons accepted their first inmates in the mid-1980s."

Tracing the origins of the prison-industrial complex to a speech by Nelson Rockefeller on January 3, 1973, ignores a memorandum of November 13, 1969, from President Richard Nixon to Attorney General John Mitchell seriously questioning the efficacy of rehabilitation and directing Mitchell to develop a model "correctional system" that could be emulated by the states. Mitchell promptly translated Nixon's call for "correctional reform" into a long-range mas-

ter plan for prison reform. That plan culminated in a theretofore unprecedented \$800 million prison-building venture.

In a speech to the National Corrections Conference in December of 1971 Mitchell praised the Bureau of Prisons plan for "prison reform" and announced the Justice Department's funding of a "National Clearinghouse for Criminal Justice Architecture." In 1970 the Bureau of Prisons' average daily population was hovering around 17,000. Today it is 100,000—and moving steadily upward.

Hunter Hurst

*National Center for Juvenile Justice
Pittsburgh, Pa.*

Eric Schlosser replies:

Despite his "tough on crime" rhetoric, President Nixon behaved much like a liberal reformer, funding drug-treatment programs and eliminating mandatory prison sentences for drug offenders. In 1970 the federal government imprisoned about 21,000 inmates; a decade later it kept only 24,000 behind bars. Today it imprisons nearly five times that number. The extraordinary growth in the federal inmate population stems from the long prison sentences being given to drug offenders, owing to Reagan-era mandatory minimums and tough sentencing guidelines.

The nation's current private-prison system dates from the mid-1980s. In addition to the New York State "fee system" mentioned in my article, all sorts of private-prison schemes flourished during the nineteenth century. Inmates were often "contracted" or "leased" to entrepreneurs, especially in southern and western states. In 1894, for example, the Tennessee Coal and Iron Railroad leased the entire prison population of Tennessee for \$100,000 a year. These private-prison schemes were eliminated during the early years of this century, amid revelations that inmates were routinely being worked to death, exploited for profit, and treated worse than antebellum slaves.

Pick Your Part

The guy in the U.S. Post Office cap whom Ian Frazier met in the Los Angeles junkyard ("Pick Your Part," March *Atlantic*) would not find a "clutch fan" in that junkyard or any other. A fan clutch, maybe. Also, Frazier would have had to

rewrite the laws of gravity to get a plumb bob to project a horizontal line. Finally, when Frazier stumbled on the Buick Monte Carlo containing the Eve cigarette pack, he should have snapped it up immediately at whatever price the junkyard owner was asking. All the other Monte Carlos in the world are Chevrolets, so this one would have been worth a mint.

John Henry Skaggs
Powell, Tenn.

Ian Frazier replies:

Many car engines do indeed have a part called a clutch fan. My automotive source—Doug, at Gary's Conoco—recently showed me one and how it works. As for the plumb bob, builders use it to plot horizontal as well as vertical lines. The Monte Carlo is in fact a Chevy, as Mr. Skaggs points out.

On Tibet

Re Peter Hessler's article "Tibet Through Chinese Eyes" (February *Atlantic*): Although the issue of Tibet under Chinese rule is a complicated one, with multiple perspectives and interpretations, some hard facts are accessible to the serious scholar. Peter Hessler unfortunately does not demonstrate such critical scholarship. For instance, he uncritically recounts the Chinese propaganda that pre-1951 Tibet was an oppressive feudal society in which 95 percent of the population consisted of hereditary serfs and slaves—a view thoroughly discredited by Rebecca French's revealing book on the socio-economic system of pre-1951 Tibet, titled *The Golden Yoke: The Legal Cosmology of Buddhist Tibet*. Hessler gives detailed statistics on the amounts of money that China has invested in Tibet, but fails to inform the reader about the vast resources that China has already removed from Tibet, at no benefit to the Tibetans. Contrary to Hessler's claim, this is indeed a classic colonial situation, as indicated in part by Hessler's own account of the attitude of the Sichuan settlers in Tibet. Moreover, Hessler's assertion that the Chinese government is helpless to keep them out of Tibet is preposterous: note how effectively this totalitarian government controls its population in a myriad of ways. Perhaps most objectionable is Hessler's portrayal of

the Tibetans as a primitive race, incapable of learning three languages at a time (which is exactly what Tibetan refugees are doing in their schools in India), of whom 95 percent were illiterate prior to the Chinese occupation (a demonstrably false claim). Before the savage Chinese genocide, Tibet had a rich and in many respects advanced civilization, and the people were on the whole happy—something that Hessler accurately states is generally not true of anyone in Tibet today, despite all the Chinese sacrifices and contributions to their latest conquest.

B. Alan Wallace
Lecturer in Tibetan Studies
University of California
Santa Barbara, Calif.

Peter Hessler replies:

Nowhere does my article recount the Chinese propaganda that "pre-1951 Tibet was an oppressive feudal society in which 95 percent of the population consisted of hereditary serfs and slaves." I wrote, "Although the Chinese exaggerate the ills of the feudal system, mid-century Tibet was badly in need of reform—but naturally the Tibetans would have much preferred to reform it themselves."

This assessment is backed by first-person Tibetan accounts—for example, Tashi Tsering's autobiography, *The Struggle for Modern Tibet*. Tsering is nobody's propagandist; he is highly critical of both the Chinese and the pre-1951 Tibetan society that denied him educational and social opportunities as a young man. Unfortunately there is a distinct shortage of voices like his, because this debate has become so highly politicized that almost nobody stands between the widely divergent views of the Chinese and the Tibetan government-in-exile.

I strongly disagree with descriptions of Tibet as classic colonialism. The first rule of colonialism has always been that the colony supports itself while sending resources back to the owning country, and this is clearly not the case in Tibet. My sources here are neither the Chinese government nor the Tibetan government-in-exile but unaligned foreign observers who estimate that more than 90 percent of the Tibet Autonomous Region's revenue comes from outside the region.

My point is not that this money has been well spent; in many cases it has been wasted. But it is critical to recognize that

the Chinese are in Tibet not because they are greedy or savage but because they sincerely believe that this is part of their nation—a nation that in the past was broken apart by foreign imperialism. Until Americans think seriously about the sensibility involved in this viewpoint, and how it complicates the issue, it's unlikely that we will play a productive role in bringing these two sides together.

Einstein and Planck

In his review of *Einstein's Miraculous Year* ("A Cataclysm of Thought," January *Atlantic*), Alan Lightman implies that Einstein originated the idea of light as a quantum phenomenon. My encyclopedia claims that it was Max Planck, who proposed this idea four years earlier. The ratio of the energy of a quantum to its frequency has ever since been known as Planck's (not Einstein's) constant. In 1918 Planck was awarded the Nobel Prize for his discovery. Einstein did make an important contribution in recognizing that the photoelectric effect was a quantum phenomenon, not explainable by classical physics, for which he was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1921.

The same source also reports that it was Max Planck who, in 1912, successfully applied the quantum theory of radiation to explain the spectrum from a "black body," another result that was unexplainable by classical physics. In 1917 Einstein published a paper in which he deduced the law of radiation using the generalized Bohr atom instead of Planck's linear oscillator.

Have I misread Lightman? Einstein deserves a lot of credit, but not all of it.

Arnold Benson
Houston, Texas

Alan Lightman replies:

My discussion of Einstein's quantum theory was not meant to be misleading. Max Planck developed the quantum hypothesis as a mathematical and heuristic device to explain the radiation in "black body" enclosures, and his quantumization referred to the allowed energy levels of the atoms inside the container. Einstein revolutionized Planck's heuristic idea by proposing that the quantum represent actual physical entities, namely the units of electromagnetic radiation called photons.

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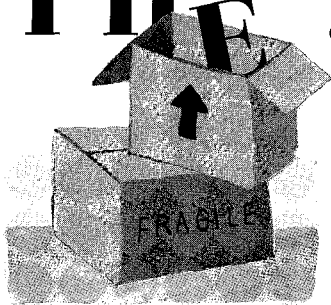
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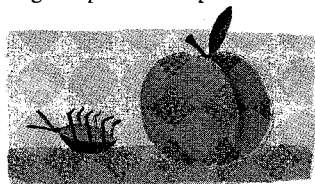


Demographics

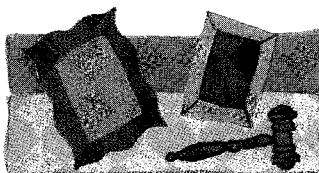
June is the busiest month for moving companies, as many families take advantage of good weather and children's summer vacations to make the transition to new homes. Every year some 42 million Americans move, but most don't go far: two thirds stay in the same county, and only about 15 percent cross state lines. A group whose number and visibility have been increasing in recent decades is "halfbacks," or retirees who, having previously moved from the North to Florida, are now moving partway back, settling in such states as Georgia, Virginia, and North Carolina. Halfbacks reflect a growing preference among retirees for areas that are more rural, less expensive, and safer than traditional retirement spots. From 1960 to 1990 North Carolina, for example, went from twenty-seventh to fifth on the list of states receiving people aged 60 and over—and from 1970 to 1990 Florida went from eighth to third on the list of states *losing* senior citizens.

Food

The peach season begins in most parts of the country in June, but consumers might think twice about biting into the fruit: U.S. peaches contain more residues of pesticides than any other domestic or imported fruits or vegetables tested by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Although the toxins in U.S. peaches are within legal limits, they are potentially unhealthy to children: by eating a single unpeeled U.S. peach a child



can ingest more pesticide residue than is deemed to be safe per day. Domestic produce in general is more contaminated than imported produce (other offenders include unpeeled apples and pears, spinach, and winter squash), news that has spurred consumer groups to push for more-stringent regulations. Ironically, USDA scientists recently announced that a compound in peach oil kills fungus and other pests and could replace one of the most toxic pesticides—but the approval process for new pesticides can take years.

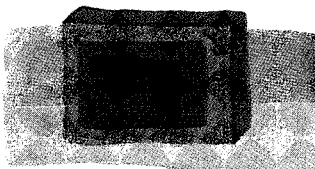


Arts & Letters

Notoriously averse to foreign influence (for example, they have formed committees to prevent the incursion of English words and phrases), the French have, not surprisingly, monopolized the art market in their country for the past 400 years, allowing auctions to be held only by French auctioneers. The situation may begin to change this month, when Sotheby's helps to organize one of the largest house sales ever conducted on French soil. The contents of the Château de Groussay, a nineteenth-century house outside Paris that is considered a showcase of twentieth-century decorative arts, will be auctioned June 2–6. Sotheby's will be paid only for organizing the event, and will not share in the proceeds. In the meantime, the French National Assembly is expected to debate the issue of foreign auctioneers. Allowing them full participation could stem the export of millions of dollars' worth of art to major international auctioneers each year; on the other hand, French auctioneers, typically trained in law rather than business, might find themselves overwhelmed by competitors with more experience.

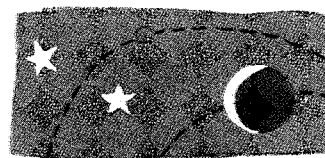
Government

July 1: Duty-free shopping for those traveling between European countries is scheduled to be at an end by today. The change was mandated by the European Commission eight years ago, in order to promote equality among member countries; however, Britain, France, and Germany strenuously opposed the change. Their main reason was that jobs would be lost; less convincingly, perhaps, some also deplored the fact that people would be deprived of the joy of spending money to save money. Also this month, barring the unlikely event of last-minute congressional action, the Independent Counsel Act will expire, on June 30. The law, which requires the Attorney General to seek an outside investigator when there is evidence of a crime by the President or another high-ranking official, was enacted in 1978 and renewed in 1994. There have been 20 independent counsels, whose investigations have cost nearly \$150 million in all.



Health & Safety

This month, after countless studies assessing the effects on children of violence on television and in the movies, a presidential initiative will convene experts to address the problems encountered by children who witness the real thing. The initiative will, among other things, seek to review and enhance criminal sentencing for those who commit violence in the presence of a child, provide training to law-enforcement personnel in ways to avoid further traumatizing children who have seen or been subjected to abuse, and help communities and states to develop projects for aiding children involved in violent situations.

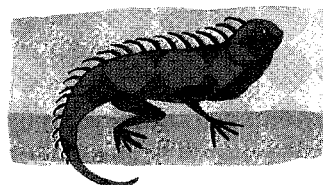


The Skies

June 1: Venus lies nearly in a line with the twin stars Castor and Pollux in the west at dusk. 16: Venus sits above the crescent Moon in the west at twilight. 21: At 3:49 P.M. EDT, the Summer Solstice. 22: Reddish Mars, which is visible all night for much of the month, tonight lies close to the gibbous Moon in the evening sky. 28: Full Moon, also known this month as the Rose and Strawberry Moon.

75 Years Ago

Isabel Cooper, writing in the June, 1924, issue of *The Atlantic Monthly*: "Lizards are incredibly beautiful objects. . . . The huge tree iguanas are architectural triumphs. There is a noble dignity in their majolica façades, and an expression of arrogant ferocity in their golden eyes, that I am sure illumined the countenances of the warriors of Salamis or the fearless Vikings of the Conquests. We had a proud, uncompromising old grandfather of an iguana once, whose hide was perfectly marvelous. . . . From the top of his head to the tip of his tail, like the feathers in an Indian's head-dress, went a crest of upright green scales, each with a backward crescent curve. He used to lash the sides of his glass cage with his powerful tail, and then stand motionless and shoot lightnings of exasperated rage from his fierce eyes, looking just as mad as he felt—like a person having difficulties with Central in a glass telephone-booth."





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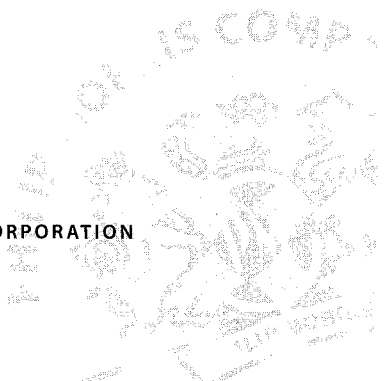
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The Mirror of Dorian Gray

Mirrors never lie, they say. But how much truth do we really want?

FREUD. Durkheim. Levi-Strauss. Mead. Lorenz. Bettelheim. Spock. Skinner. And now the Walter siblings, of Manhattan, whose names may one day join these others on the edifice of self-understanding. John Walter, whose background is in physics and computer science, and Catherine Walter, whose background is in cultural anthropology, are the progenitors of the Hair Part Theory, an exploration of psycho-behavioral dynamics to which a friend recently drew my attention. The Hair Part Theory states,

The way a person parts [his or her] hair is related to many subconscious associations when assessed by others. Each hair part type initiates cycles of behavior toward, and response from, the individual. Over time, these cycles affect personality development.

The underlying premise of the Hair Part Theory is that parting one's hair on the left calls subliminal attention to left-hemisphere brain processes—associated with logic, verbal acuity, and “activities traditionally attributed to masculinity in our culture”—and tends to be regarded as natural for men. Similarly, parting one's hair on the right evokes right-hemisphere processes—associated with visual, artistic, and musical skills, and “nonlinear tasks traditionally attributed to femininity in our culture”—and tends to be regarded as natural for women.

I don't intend to get drawn into a debate on differences between the sexes; the Hair Part Theory has to do with cultural perceptions, not biological realities. The Walters' point is merely that the “wrong” hair part can play against type, sometimes in a way that proves subtly advantageous but more often in a way that creates vague discomfort in onlookers and may lead to being shunned. Being shunned, in turn, may reinforce eccentricity and other abnormal behavior.

Margaret Thatcher's left-side part supposedly enhanced her aura of strength and will; Hillary Clinton's left-side part seems to produce a more brittle version of the same effect. The right-side parts of Robert Kennedy, Laurence Olivier, Gary Cooper, and Lou Gehrig added an intriguingly soft dimension to otherwise solid, confident personas. But Jimmy Carter's right-side part may have reinforced perceptions of inadequacy; he

didn't switch hair-part side to the left until halfway through his presidency—too late. Overall, six

American Presidents maintained right-side parts throughout their term in office;

three of them (James Buchanan, Andrew Johnson, and Warren G. Harding) are deemed by historians to be among our worst, and two others (John Tyler and Chester Arthur) are deemed to be inconsequential. (The sixth was Ronald Reagan.) Bill Clinton's brushed-back coiffure defies rigid analysis, but manifests a “right emphasis.”

Other well-known right-parters: Major Frank Burns, of *M*A*S*H*; John Tesh; *MAD* magazine's Alfred E. Neuman; Al Gore; Macaulay Culkin; Regis Philbin. In the movies Clark Kent parts his hair on the right. Appropriately, Superman parts his hair on the left.

The origins of the Hair Part Theory lie in John Walter's adolescence, when he remedied a seemingly intractable deficiency in social standing by the simple expedient of changing his hair part from right to left. Simultaneously, Walter experienced an epiphany regarding the insidious role played by the common household mirror, which had shown him in reverse all those years.

Moved by his experience, Walter embarked on a crusade to create a mirror that would show objects not in reverse but as they actually appear to observers—an effect one sometimes encounters accidentally through a freak alignment of mirrors in a hotel bathroom. A patent for a



by Cullen Murphy

Illustration by Greg Clarke



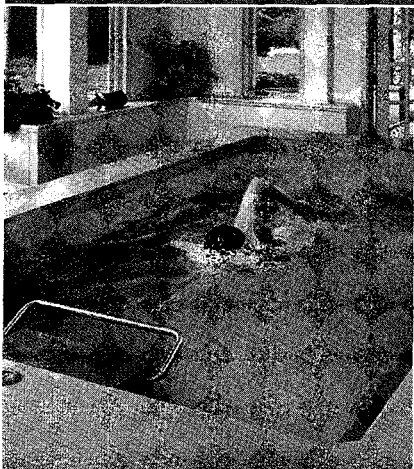
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nonreversing mirror had in fact been issued in England, in 1887; an actual prototype has never been found and may never have been made. Walter tackled the problem anew. The result is the True Mirror, which "shows you what you look like to others" and thus "allows you to gain an accurate sense of yourself."

Not long ago, finding myself in New York City, where the Walter siblings have set up a workshop, I decided to buy a True Mirror. The workshop fronted on a dark alley a block or so off Broadway, near City Hall. Following Catherine Walter's instructions, I called from a pay phone nearby. She brought my mirror down to the street. It is a bulky, heavy object in a deep, boxlike frame; a precise opposition of two ordinary mirrors is required to create the correct effect. The True Mirror will not soon be available for use with handbag cosmetics or, unless you are a hippopotamus, in dental instruments.

My new mirror came with an assortment of testimonials. "So that's what I look like! I look better than I thought!" "It is like looking at someone who looks familiar, but who I've never seen before." "Is this really who I am? My entire persona is 180 degrees from my own perception." "Thank you! This is the correction of life-long deception of other mirrors." "I saw a person I'm not sure I know, but would like to."

In an ordinary mirror your right eye stares at your right eye and your left eye at your left eye—the opposite of the right-left, left-right connection we employ for assessing one another in the wild. The image in a True Mirror can come as something of a shock. You tend to look the way you do in photographs, which for many people is also a shock. (This is the flip side of the start you sometimes get when looking at the reflected image of someone you are accustomed to seeing in person.) A newspaper headline held up to a True Mirror doesn't appear backward—it reads just fine. But your own face may seem oddly asymmetrical. Facial mannerisms nurtured in front of a normal mirror (that shy, knowing smile of bemusement tinged with mystery) may in a True Mirror be revealed in a different light (a flaccid gash of self-doubt). "It is a wholly new view for many," the True Mirror's promotional literature con-

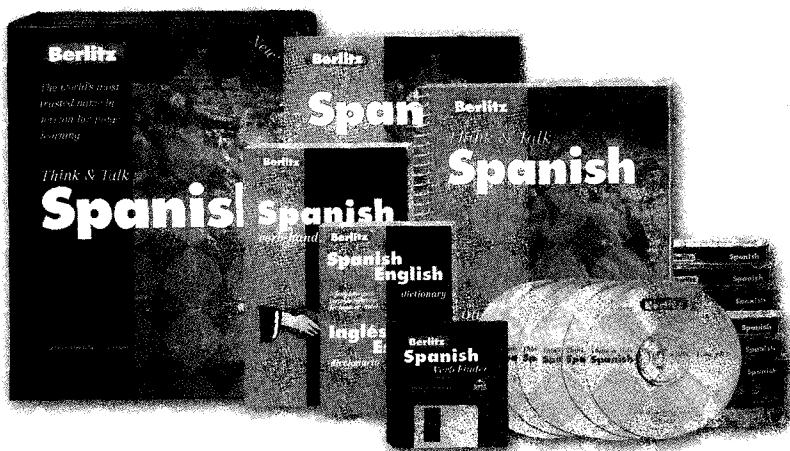
cedes, "and not surprisingly, some don't like or feel comfortable with the new look." Such people may think they have come upon the Mirror of Dorian Gray.

Another issue: in a True Mirror you seem to have far less control over the figure in the glass than you do in a normal mirror. If you turn to the right in front of a normal mirror, the image turns with you and ends up facing in the same direction, completing the visual palindrome. In a True Mirror the image faces the other way, as if you were about to begin pacing off for a duel with yourself; and when you take a step, the image steps away from you. In a normal mirror your reflected finger comes out to meet your real one until they touch, like Michelangelo's God and Adam. In a True Mirror the reflected finger comes at you from the other side of the glass, as if pointed by the other hand. Ordinarily, you have no difficulty looking at a normal mirror and guiding your hand to an object reflected in it. Try this with a True Mirror, and your grasp will prove errant. Shaving becomes a blood sport. If all the rearview mirrors in America's cars were suddenly replaced by True Mirrors, there could be a very special episode of *ER*.

The True Mirror is intended to restore a sense of reality; in truth it adds elements of perplexity to an object that offers plenty of them already. Mirrored images have always been a reliable portal into the twilight zone—the tradition runs from the myth of Narcissus through Lewis Carroll to Groucho's mirrorlike transaction with Chico in *Duck Soup*. London's National Gallery last year mounted an extraordinary show, pulled together by the director and critic Jonathan Miller, called "Mirror Image," which traced the influence of mirrors in Western art—real mirrors, implied mirrors, reflections, reversals, glints of light on apples and eyes. René Magritte's *La Reproduction Interdite* was there—the famous painting that shows a man looking at the back of his own head in a mirror. Some lesser-known works are more quietly preposterous. A sixteenth-century painting by Hans Suess von Kulmbach shows God seated in heaven; why does the crystal orb in his hand reflect a mullioned window?

In the book that accompanied the exhibit, *On Reflection*, Miller notes that the size of the mirrors in paintings has gradually grown larger over the centuries—

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indicating some combination of ascendant Western hubris and self-discovery, no doubt, but also the simple fact that technological progress has made bigger mirrors possible. The Russians have been planning to build an array of giant space mirrors to serve as artificial moons and provide extra light during long northern winters. (The first of these experimental mirrors was launched into space in February, but failed to unfold.) The largest reflecting surface of all may eventually be the entire planet, if one doomsday scenario comes to pass. Were the polar ice cap ever to reach a latitude as far south as Boston, something called the albedo effect would kick in: the amount of solar energy reflected out of the atmosphere (and therefore not retained by the earth) would increase so dramatically that the rest of the earth would freeze over in a snap.

■ ■ ■

Reflectivity is about surface images, and especially about images over which one can exercise some control. But control over image may have reached a high point from which it is rapidly receding. The future belongs not to reflectivity but to "transparency." The idea crops up everywhere now, the word "transparent" being used metaphorically to mean some combination of "visible through and through," "totally aboveboard," and "what you see is what you get." A non-profit organization called Transparency International now produces an annual Corruption Perception Index—a survey that tracks public impressions of the extent of venality in some eighty-five countries. A *New York Times* story describing a murder last year on Vatican soil, and raising questions about the integrity of the investigation, noted that the secular world "remains deeply suspicious of the Vatican's commitment to modern standards of transparency." The U.S. Treasury has proposed the creation of an "international transparency standard" for global financial dealings. To highlight what one newspaper commentary calls "postwar Germany's overriding preoccupation with transparency," the new dome on the rebuilt Reichstag building is made entirely of glass.

As the Reichstag example suggests, the notion of transparency is fast moving from the metaphoric to the literal to the surreal. Last year the Gill & Lagodich

gallery, in New York, mounted an exhibit devoted to picture frames, titled "One Hundred Years on the Edge." The frames were hung empty, creating seductive windows onto a void. The recent news that a team of scientists in Massachusetts had succeeded in artificially slowing the speed of light (to thirty-eight miles an hour) apparently heralds another triumph of transparency. According to press reports, the slowdown somehow means that opacity-piercing night goggles of superior power will now become a reality. More ominous, Attorney General Janet Reno is looking into establishing a national DNA registry, even as computer makers press to encode all digital information with identifying user tags—measures that threaten to raise transparency in the form of personal permeability to an unprecedented level. Commenting on the implications, the chairman of Sun Microsystems stated simply, "You already have zero privacy—get over it."

Given what transparency has in store for us, we may look back on the Age of the True Mirror, and the Hair Part Theory, with a certain wistfulness. When we do, a corpus of social-science research will be available for study. Catherine Walter has been relentlessly gathering data. Her analysis of hair-part side and nationwide electoral patterns is already complete. One highlight: as of last fall, the ranks of governors, senators, and representatives were devoid of right-siders in fifteen states, mostly in the "rugged cowboy" West or in "highly traditional" New England. "When I pulled that map together," Catherine Walter says, "it was like, 'Whoa!'" Walter maintains an ambitious roster of future research tasks, including a study of high school yearbook photographs since 1900 to tabulate hair-part trends, and, more tentatively, a study of correlation between hair-part side and Myers-Briggs personality type.

The Walters will continue to spread the word about hair parts and the True Mirror. They turn up at trade shows, and maintain a Web site (www.truemirror.com). They fully understand that their work is delicate. "Men in particular are reluctant to change their hair part," Catherine observes, "and you can't just begin walking up to people in the street." No, but if you call from a pay phone nearby, she'll be happy to come down. ☼

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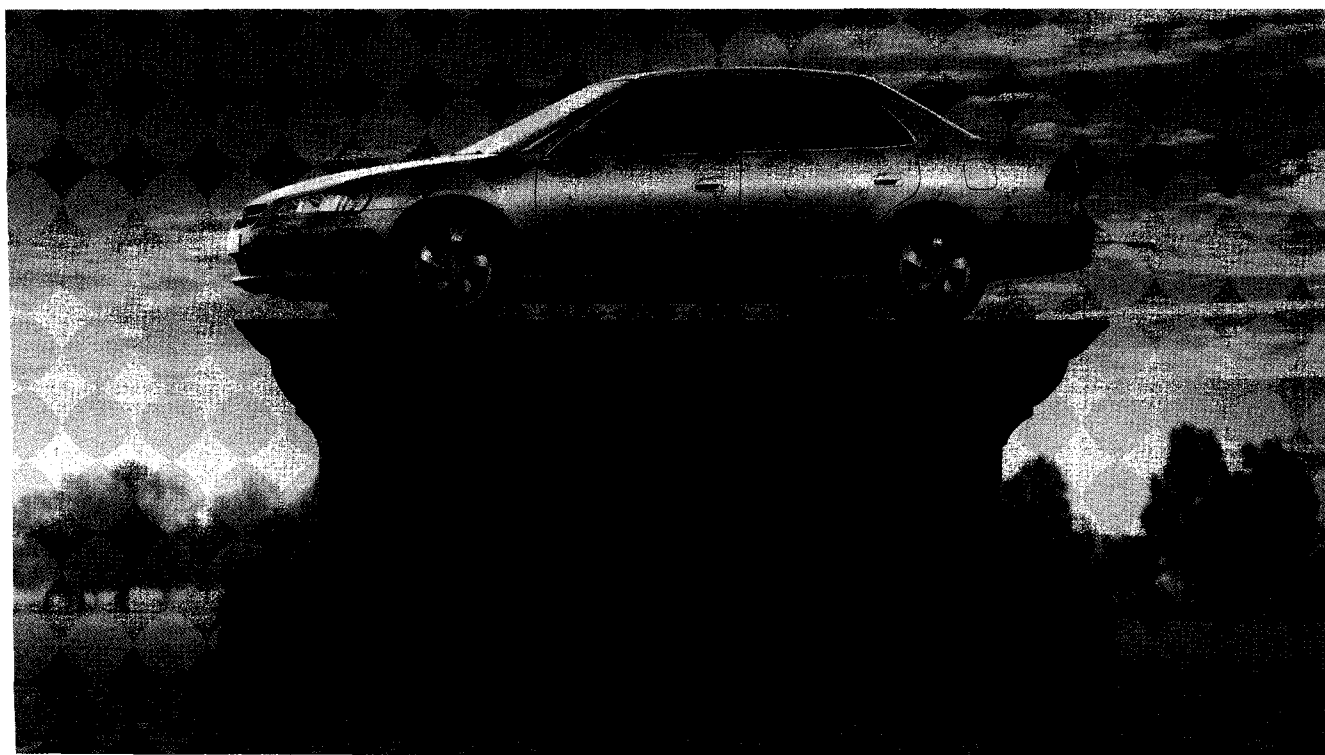
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Isolation cell, Charles T. Terrell Unit, Livingston, Texas

When They Get Out

How prisons, established to fight crime, produce crime—a sequel to our December cover story, “The Prison-Industrial Complex”

POPULAR perceptions about crime have blurred the boundaries between fact and politically expedient myth. The myth is that the United States is besieged, on a scale never before encountered, by a pathologically criminal underclass. The fact is that we’re not. After spiraling up-

ward during the drug wars, murder rates began falling in the mid-1990s; they are lower today than they were more than twenty years ago. In some cities the murder rate in the late twentieth century is actually lower than it was in the nineteenth century. Nonviolent property-crime rates are in general

ward during the drug wars, murder rates began falling in the mid-1990s; they are lower today than they were more than twenty years ago. In some cities the murder rate in the late twentieth century is actually lower than it was in the nineteenth century. Nonviolent property-crime rates are in general

lower in the United States today than in Great Britain, and are comparable to those in many European countries.

Nevertheless, horror stories have led to calls for longer prison sentences, for the abolition of parole, and for the increasingly punitive treatment of prisoners. The politics of opinion-poll populism has encouraged elected and corrections officials to build isolation units, put more prisons on “lockdown” status (in which prisoners are kept in their cells about twenty-three hours a day), abolish grants that allowed prisoners to study toward diplomas and degrees, and generally make life inside as miserable as possible. Marc Mauer, the assistant director of the Sentencing Project, an advocacy group based in Washington, D.C., says, “Fifty years ago rehabilitation was a primary goal of the system.” Nowadays it’s not. “The situation we’re in now is completely unprecedented,” Mauer says. “The number going through the system dwarfs that in any other period in U.S. history and virtually in any other country as well.” In 1986, according to figures published in the *Survey of State Prison Inmates* (1991), 175,662 people were serving sentences of more than ten years; five years later 306,006 were serving such sentences. People haven’t become more antisocial; their infractions and bad habits are just being punished more ruthlessly. Crime, however, is a complex issue, and responses to it that might instinctively seem sensible, or simply satisfying, may prove deeply counterproductive. Locking ever more people away will in the long run increase the number of Robert Scullys in our midst.

Robert Scully grew up near San Diego, in the affluent town of Ocean Beach. From a very early age he used drugs, and before he was a teenager, he had been on the streets and then in juvenile facilities run by the California Youth Authority. From heroin use and dealing he moved to robbery; by the time he was twenty-two, in the early 1980s, he was in San Quentin. In prison Scully degenerated, eventually using a contraband hacksaw blade to escape from his cell and attacking an-

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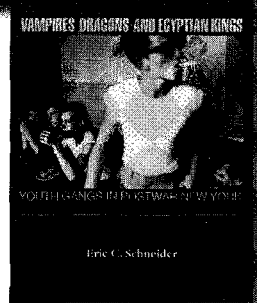
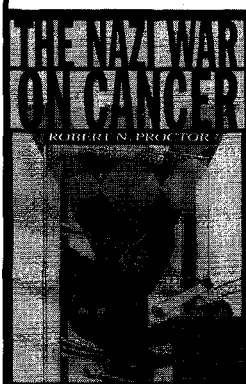
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other inmate with a homemade knife.

At about the same time, California began opening what it called maximum-security facilities—dumping grounds for troublesome inmates. Scully wound up in solitary confinement in a prison named Corcoran. The guards there, as recently reported in the *Los Angeles Times*, are alleged to have taken it upon themselves to organize gladiatorial combat among prisoners in the exercise yard; they would sometimes break up the battles by shooting into crowds of prisoners. Scully was shot twice. He was placed in a "security housing unit" cell, where for close to twenty-three hours a day he was deprived of all human interaction. In 1990, soon after the "supermax" prison at Pelican Bay had opened in the redwood forests northeast of the old Victorian timber town of Crescent City, Scully was moved again, into a tiny bare cell with a perforated sheet-metal door and a hatch through which his food was served. In the supermax even exercise was solitary. He stayed there four years. At the time of his release, in 1994, he had spent the previous nine years in isolation. A month later he was arrested for violating parole by consorting with an armed acquaintance, and went straight back to Pelican Bay.

Scully re-emerged on March 24, 1995, by now a human time bomb. He was picked up by Brenda Moore, the girlfriend of a fellow inmate, and they began driving south, along Highway 101, toward San Diego, where Scully was supposed to check in with his parole officer. They never made it. Five days later they arrived in Sebastopol, a town an hour north of San Francisco. There, late at night, they loitered around a restaurant until the owner, fearing a robbery, called the police. The pair drove off to a nearby parking lot. Soon after, as they sat in their truck, Deputy Sheriff Frank Trejo, a middle-aged grandfather looking forward to his retirement, pulled into the lot.

Trejo asked to see the woman's license, and as she fumbled for it, according to investigators, he suddenly found a sawed-off shotgun pointing at his face. He was made to back up until he was between the two vehicles and get on his knees, and Scully shot him in the forehead. Scully and Moore ran across a field, broke into a house, and took a family hostage. The next afternoon, with police surrounding the area, Scully negotiated his surrender.

Robert Scully evolved into a murderer while housed in Pelican Bay. There he experienced some of the harshest confinement conditions known in the democratic world. Highly disturbed to start with, he was kept in a sensory-deprivation box for years on end. Psychologists and psychiatrists called in by his defense team believe that he simply lost the ability to think through the consequences of his actions. He became a creature of brutal and obsessive impulse. At Scully's trial Stuart Grassian, a psychiatrist who has spent much of his career studying the effects of isolation on prisoners, and who has testified in class-action lawsuits against departments of corrections across the country, argued that sensory deprivation and social isolation had caused Scully to regress until he was a violent animal capable only of acting on instinct, with no ability to plan beyond the moment. His incarceration had created what Grassian termed "a tremendous tunnel vision." Pelican Bay Chief Deputy Warden Joe McGrath estimates that every month thirty-five inmates are, like Scully, released from isolation directly back into the community.

Since 1985 America's prison population, not counting the more than half a million people in jails at any one time, has increased by about six or seven percent yearly. Truth-in-sentencing laws mandate that many prisoners serve 85 percent of their sentences before being eligible for

*Locking ever more
people away will
ultimately increase the
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parole; all the same, figures over the past decade indicate that on average more than 40 percent of prison inmates are released in any given year. Assuming that these statistical relationships remain constant, we can make certain predictions. In 1995 a total of 463,284 inmates were released. To use a worst-case scenario, some 660,000 will be released in 2000, some



Isolation cell, Alfred D. Hughes Unit, Gatesville, Texas

887,000 in 2005, and about 1.2 million in 2010. Even factoring in lower release rates because of three-strikes laws and truth in sentencing, and even taking into account estimates that 60 percent of prisoners have been in prison before, there will still be somewhere around 3.5 million first-time releases between now and 2010, and America by then will still be releasing from half a million to a million people from its prisons each year (not to mention hundreds of thousands more from short stints in jail). That is an awful lot of potential rage coming out of prison to haunt our future.

ON a gray morning in September, with the tropical storm Frances hovering over the Gulf Coast, I rode with Larry Fitzgerald, the sixty-year-old public-relations officer for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, to a parking lot deep inside the Estelle Unit of the Huntsville complex, seventy miles north of Houston. Surrounding the car was a landscape of rolled razor-wire fences, surveillance cameras, bleak watchtowers, and gray concrete buildings. Fitzgerald told me that he was tired; the previous evening he had attended an execution, his sixtieth in the five years he had been with the department. We got out of the car and flashed our IDs at the camera. A series of heavy electronically operated doors clicked open, one after another. We went through one, and it closed behind us before a second opened. We entered a

sterile hallway lit by fluorescent ceiling lights, the air smelling the way one would expect it to smell in a place where the outside had been utterly banished. There the warden and several hefty corrections officers met us, and we proceeded into the bowels of the prison, away from outdoor light, away from outdoor sounds, deep into the computer-controlled hidden hell at the heart of America's burgeoning incarceration establishment.

There are up to 660 men living in isolation behind the metallic-blue and Plexiglas doors of the Estelle Unit's "administrative segregation" cells, the high-security facility at Huntsville that opened in August of 1997. (Texas is currently developing five more "supermax" units that will eventually hold more than 3,000 people.) Depending on their status—there are three levels—the men get from three to seven hours of exercise a week, and from two to eight hours of visits a month. The rest of the time they remain in their cells. "The security here," Fitzgerald told me with satisfaction, "is better than Alcatraz. Alcatraz didn't have the electronic things we have now. The art of incarceration has definitely improved." The inmates, disciplinary cases from the broader prison system, are men removed not just from the outside society but from the rest of Texas's 140,000-plus prisoners, as close to being vanished spirits as any resident of a medieval dungeon. On them is being performed one of the most astounding social experiments in America's

history: isolated for about twenty-three hours a day in bathroom-sized quarters, fed through hatches in their doors, provided with virtually no sensory stimuli for months or years on end, deprived of full meals as punishment for breaking rules, made to dress in paper gowns if they dare to rip up their uniforms, many quite simply seem to go insane. While I was touring the unit, a desperate prisoner "self-mutilated," slashing at the veins in his hands until his blood spurted over the walls, the floor, and the steel seat of the cell he was in, like a peculiarly vivid Jackson Pollock painting.

The inmates are often tormented by headaches. Many quite clearly can no longer focus their thoughts on anything. Some weep; others obsess; the more resilient, like David Prater, a twenty-six-year-old lifer who has a degree in finance from the University of Texas, read as much and as often as possible to while away the days. But they are a minority. The average IQ of a Texas prison inmate is 92, and many do not even know how to read. From what I could tell, many of those guarding them aren't much smarter. As prisoners from the nearby low-security unit mopped up the blood from the cutting, guards made jokes about the "mutilator." An officer with the rank of captain assured me that all the inmates were psychologically assessed when they came into Estelle, that if they were mad they would be at the psychiatric unit upstate, and that since they were here, ipso facto, they weren't mad. As he completed this logical circle, the entire "Level 3" unit behind us was rent by the howls and screams of the close-to-naked inmates. It was a hideous sound that would have been familiar in the lunatic asylums of bygone centuries. For the French philosopher Michel Foucault, who explored the histories and social functions of both the asylum and the prison in Western culture, the similarity would probably have illuminated his notion that both institutions function at least in part to reassure the outside population of its "normality" in contrast to the horror caged within.

WILLIAM Sabol, a researcher at the Urban Institute, a Washington, D.C., think tank, has recently begun studying imprisonment and release statistics for ninety metropolitan areas. Over the next few years he will focus on



Restraining chair, Maricopa County Jail, Phoenix, Arizona

releases in Baltimore, a city with a very high incarceration rate, exploring the effects of release on different communities. For Sabol, the biggest concern is not that already devastated inner cities will be further damaged but that certain struggling blue-collar areas and middle-class black districts, of whose young men large numbers have been imprisoned during the war on drugs, will be unable to reabsorb the ex-cons while retaining their civic character. "When these men return," Sabol explains, "they're less likely to get jobs and there's a higher likelihood of disruption of the family. What we're interested in is will it tip the scales against those neighborhoods that are marginal?" Faced with a growing population of ex-felons, people with resources will probably flee these communities, thereby expanding the areas of devastation.

Since fewer than 10 percent of prisoners are sentenced to life, we can expect that more than 90 percent of prisoners will be released. Releasing over several decades millions of people who either never acquired job skills or lost their skills in prison, and who will face employers' suspicion, is almost guaranteed to produce localized but considerable economic problems. Currently, among black men aged twenty-five to thirty-four with less than a high school education, the jobless rate is around 50 percent. If those in prison and jail are included, the figure rises above 60 percent. If incarceration rates ever start to drop, and fewer

people are entering prison than are being released, then according to the most basic principles of supply and demand, wage levels in areas already suffering chronically high levels of unemployment will plummet as the competition for scarce jobs increases.

The sociologists Bruce Western, of Princeton University, and Katherine Beckett, of Indiana University, are convinced that the economic problems of mass release actually run much deeper. In January of this year they published a paper titled "How Unregulated Is the U.S. Labor Market? The Penal System as a Labor Market Institution," in which they argued that one of the reasons America's unemployment statistics look so good in comparison with those of other industrial democracies is that 1.6 million mainly low-skilled workers—precisely the group least likely to find work in a high-tech economy—have been incarcerated, and are thus not considered part of the labor force. Rendering such a large group of people invisible, the authors claimed, creates a numerical mirage in which unemployment statistics are as much as two percent below the real unemployment level, and which has been made possible only by what Beckett terms an American "intervention in the economy [the growth of the prison system] comparable financially to Western Europe's unemployment benefit and welfare programs." If mass imprisonment is what the urban scholar Mike Davis, in

his book *Ecology of Fear*, terms "carceral Keynesianism"—using prison building and maintenance as an enormous public-works program to shore up an economy in which blue-collar jobs have been exported to the Third World—then mass release may well prove its undoing.

Eddie Ellis, a onetime Black Panther who was recently released after serving out a twenty-five-year sentence for murder, believes that the cities are sitting on volcanoes. Now a full-time organizer in the Harlem-based Community Justice Center, Ellis told me when we met that starting around the year 2005, New York is going to see the release of wave after wave of inmates, at the rate of about 30,000 a year, who were incarcerated after 1990. "That's when they began phasing out the programs [education in prison, vocational training, and the like]. By 1994 to 1995 they no longer existed. These are the people we're talking about coming out in such a horrendous condition. The next wave that comes out, we're looking at a serious influx of people into a few communities that not only will devastate these communities but will have a larger consequence for the whole city." The welfare reforms of 1996 drastically curtailed felons' access to welfare money, and specifically barred addicts from access to Medicaid and many drug-rehabilitation programs. Ellis predicts rising epidemics, as ex-prisoners without work or Medicaid spread TB, HIV, and hepatitis.

*Some neighborhood
may be unable to retain
their civic character
while reabsorbing
numbers of ex-cons*

To complete a grim picture, wholesale incarceration decimates voter rolls. In all but four states prisoners convicted of felonies lose the right to vote. In more than thirty states they can reapply only when they're off parole. Those who find work while on parole will—like much of the black population of the pre-civil-rights South—be paying taxes into a po-

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litical system in which they have no say. In California alone close to a quarter of a million people are disenfranchised by such laws.

The situation is even worse in twelve states—almost half of them southern—where a felony can result in disenfranchisement for life. The history of these disenfranchisement laws can be traced straight back to the post-Civil War South; because of the disproportionate number of black men in prison today, the laws continue to affect not just individuals but the aspirations and political influence of entire communities. In a study released last October, the Sentencing Project and Human Rights Watch, an advocacy group based in New York, reported that throughout the country two percent of adults, or approximately four million people, are disenfranchised; within the black male community the figure is 13 percent, or 1.4 million men. In seven states—Alabama, Florida, Iowa, Mississippi, New Mexico, Virginia, and Wyoming—fully a quarter of all black men are permanently ineligible to vote. In Florida alone 204,600 black men, and in Texas 156,600 black men, have lost the vote.

The political implications for the next century are troubling. Already the inner cities, where on average more than a quarter of young black men are disenfranchised, have seen their power as voting blocs shrivel. And since today's young are tomorrow's old, the problem can only get worse. In 1997 the Justice Department estimated that 29 percent of black males born in 1991 would spend some time in prison. Only four percent of white males would do so. In some cities in the states in which convicted felons are permanently disenfranchised, as older, pre-prison-boom blacks die out, the proportion of black men of all ages who lack the right to vote will rise to about one third by 2020. In certain parts of some southern cities—Houston, Memphis, Miami, and New Orleans, for example—it may be as many as half. Conceivably, an overwhelmingly black town could have an electoral register dominated by a white minority.

Quite simply, mass incarceration followed by mass release into subcitizenship will undermine the great democratic achievements of the past half century. In effect, even if not in intent, after the brief interregnum of the civil-rights years the

South, with the rest of the country in tow, is once again moving toward excluding huge numbers of African-Americans from the political process. Marc Mauer, of the Sentencing Project, says, "It's a wonder there's any black representation at all, given the numbers."

RECENTLY I met several ex-prisoners in New York City who were putting their lives back together under the auspices of the Fortune Society, a non-profit organization that runs one of the country's most successful and intensive post-release programs. Some of the people I met had done terrible things; others had merely taken foolish wrong turns. Regardless, talking with them gave each one a human face. It helped me to understand that most of these ex-cons are damaged people with hopes and fears and dreams that perhaps can be coaxed out of them in a nurturing environment like Fortune's.

The most extraordinary of the people I met was a thirty-nine-year-old named Edmond Taylor, who had served a total of eighteen years in a variety of New York's toughest prisons for crimes ranging from drug dealing to violent assault. Out of prison for the past couple of years, Taylor has dedicated himself to change; he works full time as a counselor, helping other prisoners to adjust to life on the outside, and he is regarded by Fortune's executive director, JoAnne Page, as one of her great success stories. Taylor came to meet me straight from counseling a distraught woman who'd been told at a job interview that the company wouldn't hire her because she had a felony conviction. He said, "If I can save just one person a year, I'm happy."

A highly articulate man, more capable than most of understanding what led him into violence and helped to destroy half his life, Taylor explained that he had spent nearly four years in "the box"—some of that time in Clinton Dannemora prison, near the Canadian border, for being what he described as "a vocal critic" of conditions within the prison. Describing his reaction to being released from isolation back into the general prison population, he said, "First there's fear, then there's anger, and the anger takes over. It's violent anger. Very quick. No thought of the magnitude of the consequence of the violence. An individual

bumped me, rushing to get to the gym. And I rushed up behind him and hit him with a pipe. He went into a coma." Taylor went straight back into the box. I asked how long it had taken him to recover from isolation. He looked surprised by the question, and said, "Honestly, I've still not recovered. I've been out of isolation five and a half years. Ms. Page is my boss. If she was to confront me when I had a lot on my mind, anger would come up before rational thought. Anger. Strike back. Now it's not so much physical as verbal. In another situation it would cause me to lose my job." Then Taylor told me a shameful secret. Shortly after he got out of prison, he was living with his brother. His brother criticized him for some of the attitudes he'd brought out of prison with him. "I felt fed up, and I attacked him," Taylor said. "I grabbed him, choked him, lifted him off his feet, threw him to the ground. I pummeled him, causing him to get several stitches above the eye. I grabbed a kitchen knife—I don't remember any of this; he told me afterward—and put it to his neck and said, 'I should kill you. I hate you.' The realization that I put my hands on my baby brother—the only person at that time who'd ever been in my corner..."

Edmond Taylor sees a future of violent chaos, with a large, uneducated army of enraged ex-cons flooding the streets of the inner cities. JoAnne Page adds, "There's an issue of critical mass. As you lock up a higher percentage of young men in a community, what happens when these guys come out, in terms of role models, crime, the safety of the community? Prisons breed global rage. People come out loaded with so much anger that they're ready to blow up at a touch." She worries that many of them, lacking jobs upon release and having no access to state support, will resort to stealing just to eat. Many will also end up homeless, with their best chance of finding shelter being to commit crimes and return to jail or prison. The Correctional Association of New York estimates that on any given day 3,800 homeless people are in prison at Rikers Island and in other New York City jails.

Without making contingency plans for it—without even realizing it—we are creating a disaster that instead of dissipating over time will accumulate with the years. ☛

JUNE
1999

Arts &

ENTERTAINMENT

PREVIEW

FILM

Hanif Kureishi's
My Son
the Fanatic

CLASSICAL

The Aspen
Music Festival
Turns Fifty

DANCE

Pilobolus
Collaborates
with Sendak

THEATER

Geoff Hoyle
in *The First
Hundred Years*

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Film

BY ELLA TAYLOR

WORLDS COLLIDE

At his best the English writer Hanif Kureishi, who wrote screenplays for the 1980s movies *My Beautiful Laundrette* and *Sammy and Rosie Get Laid*, has a bracing take—at once jaundiced, antic, and loving—on the anarchic shifts in British race relations as the country tries to adapt to its burgeoning ethnic diversity. Adapted from a *New Yorker* short story by Kureishi and directed by Udayan Prasad, *My Son the Fanatic* tells the story of Parvez (played with wry dignity by the Indian actor Om Puri), an Anglo-Pakistani cabbie who has carved out a decent life for his family in the northern English city of Bradford. Parvez's humdrum existence is disrupted by his growing attraction to an intense young hooker (played by the talented Rachel Griffiths, last seen in *Hilary and Jackie*), whom he drives to the wild parties of a German businessman (Stellan Skarsgård), aptly named Mr. Schitz. When Parvez's teenaged son



Om Puri with Rachel Griffiths (top) and with director Udayan Prasad



(Akapur Kurtha) turns to Islamic fundamentalism to anchor his uncertain identity, the tolerant, unassuming but soulful Parvez finds himself caught between the rigid proscriptions of tradition and the heedless pleasure-seeking of the businessman's world. Though it doesn't quite achieve the anarchic joy of *My Beautiful Laundrette*, which remains one of the funniest and most trenchant social critiques in the history of English film, *My Son the Fanatic* brings the same acidic verve to its observations on race and generational conflict in the nineties. Only now the political climate has changed: the younger set rebels not to the left but to the extreme Islamic right. Given that constituency's efforts to police the arts on moral grounds, the movie's lampooning of Islam's purist wing may invoke some of the fury heaped on Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*.

BLIND JUSTICE

After trying for many years to revive Terence Rattigan's hit 1948 play, *The Winslow Boy*, for the stage, David Mamet brings the courtroom melodrama to the screen (a 1948 version, scripted by Rattigan, starred Robert Donat) and, true to his obsessions, turns it into a meditation on moral choice and the inadequacy of ideology (as opposed to principled passion). Based on a real-life legal case in which a young naval cadet was expelled from his academy for allegedly stealing a five-shilling money order, the movie stars the estimable Nigel Hawthorne as Arthur Winslow, the boy's father, who, in seeking to clear his son's name, takes the case all the way to the House of Lords, provoking a national debate on English justice. Arthur's tenacious struggle imposes nearly unbearable strain on his family, especially his suffragette daughter, Catherine (Rebecca Pidgeon), who opposes hiring the conservative defense lawyer Sir Robert Morton (Jeremy Northam, recently a swoony heartthrob opposite Gwyneth Paltrow in *Emma*) and whose engagement to the son of an Admiralty bigwig is threatened by the notoriety surrounding the case. Though Mamet offers an absorbing meta-reading of the events, *The Winslow Boy* suffers from casting by

FUTILE ATTRACTION

Time was when the Italian director Bernardo Bertolucci made smart, gorgeous films (*The Spider's Stratagem*, *The Conformist*) that explored the thick web of messy relations in the compromised marriage of politics and sex. Sadly, his recent films (*Little Buddha* and *Stealing Beauty*) have gone soft with a daffy "spirituality" that renders their visual poetry banal. Bertolucci's baffling new film, *Besieged*, begins with a lament for an unnamed African dictatorship and ends with a love affair of sorts. In between is a chamber piece that focuses on the tortured attraction between a shy Rome-based English musician (played with unaccustomed awkwardness by David Thewlis, the gifted star of Mike



Bertolucci (left) and Newton

Leigh's *Naked*) and the African expatriate (Thandie Newton, last heard speaking in tongues in *Beloved*) who cleans his house while breezing through medical school on straight As and worrying over her imprisoned husband. The musician casts longing looks at his lovely housekeeper while playing Mozart; she busies herself with an excess of dusting while introducing him to Papa Wemba. The rest—a dance of mutual espionage as the two go about their daily business—is mostly silence. Which may be a mercy, given that the minimal screenplay of this psychologically and politically undercooked movie fairly groans with clichés about love and loss.



The Winslow Boy

family connection rather than merit. The writer-director's wife, Rebecca Pidgeon, renders Catherine with studied immobility, while her brother, Matthew Pidgeon, plays Catherine's fun-loving older brother without discernible personality. Mamet's habit of introducing strategic stiffness into the delivery of dialogue to underscore the unreliability of language invests the movie with a lumbering, wooden quality that is distracting rather than illuminating.

Ella Taylor is a film critic for LA Weekly.

JOTH SHAKERLEY

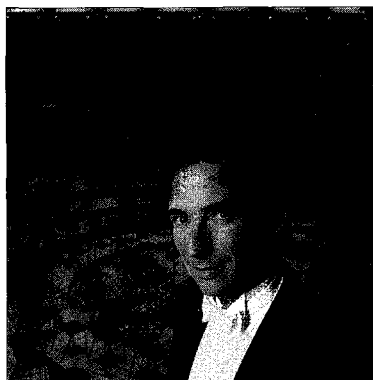
A BULGARI

Classical Music

BY AUSTIN BAER

THE ÉMIGRÉ EXPERIENCE

Like George Balanchine, like Vladimir Nabokov, Igor Stravinsky bore Russia with him to America, and the cultural landscape was never the same after. This month the San Francisco Symphony and its ebullient maestro MTT (does anyone spell out Michael Tilson Thomas anymore?) give Igor the Great the sort of festival he deserves. The wild man who set the globe atremble with *Le Sacre du printemps* (still crazy after all these years) rubs elbows with the creator of the fleet, delicate *Pulcinella*, an homage to the proto-Mozartean Pergolesi. The com-



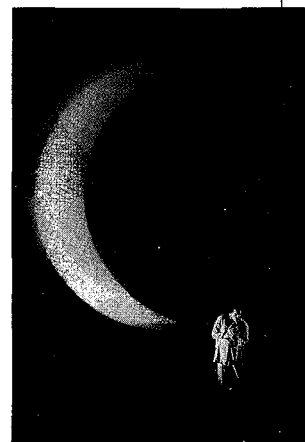
The maestro MTT

poser's multifaceted American period will be represented by pieces for Barnum & Bailey, Broadway, and Hollywood. The nimble *Agon* and the sleek, driven *Symphony in Three Movements*, scores revered by balletomanes, who know them as choreographed by Balanchine, will be played as well—no doubt a deal better than is usual in the theater. The perennial favorite *L'Histoire du soldat* will get an airing, and Grace Cathedral will reverberate with the master's often austere religious work. Occasions to experience Stravinsky in the round are surprisingly rare, so MTT's

festival qualifies as quite an event. (Provisionally, RCA Victor Red Seal has just stocked the record chains with a new three-CD set of Stravinsky by the San Francisco forces.) There is, we might add, a personal connection. Growing up in Los Angeles, the budding maestro met and heard Stravinsky on many occasions, and gained a firsthand impression of the music's folkloric, swinging quality, which cool, analytical modernists tend to overlook. For program details and tickets call 415-864-6000.

PICTURE-PERFECT

Much as books are judged by their covers, opera productions are often judged by photographs and out-of-town press. Dangerous, of course. But the images of the traveling *L'Orfeo* of Monteverdi—directed and choreographed by the postmodern dance luminary Trisha Brown, in her first such effort—look so ravishing that caution is lightly thrown to the winds. Designed by Roland Aeschlimann, the scenes look at once cool and rich, abstract yet effortlessly mesmerizing. The musical responsibilities rest with the baroque specialists of the Concerto Vocale and the Collegium Vocale under their leader, René Jacobs, formerly a counter-tenor, now a maestro full of vibrant, idiosyncratic ideas. (The ensemble's recording of Mozart's sly, diabolical *Così fan tutte* on Harmonia Mundi documents Jacobs's style in all its occasionally exasperating fascination.) Reviews from abroad have been ecstatic for *L'Orfeo*, and notably for Simon Keenlyside, who sings the mythic bard. June 10–13, at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, American audiences get to weigh the evidence firsthand (718-636-4100).



Trisha Brown's *L'Orfeo*

JOHAN JACOBS

ASPEN AT FIFTY

Somewhere along the way, from the opening evening with the violinist Sarah Chang and friends to the concluding concert rendition of Verdi's *Aida*, the fare at the fiftieth Aspen Music Festival is bound to tempt serious music lovers of almost any stripe (June 24–August 22; 970-925-9042). From the baroque Bach and Rameau to the twentieth-century classics Copland and Stravinsky and beyond, the programming covers the spectrum. *Ritual Incantations*, a cello concerto by Augusta Read Thomas, receives its world premiere on July 16. *Belladonna*, a new opera by Bernard Rands to a libretto by Leslie Dunton-Downer, follows on July 29 and 31. Inspired by Plato's dialogue *The Symposium*, in which such banqueters as the sage, wrinkled, dirt-poor Socrates and the gilded young military hero Alcibiades debate the nature of love, *Belladonna* moves the time to the present day and gives the floor to a predominantly female cast. The composer's cultivated mind and gracious musi-

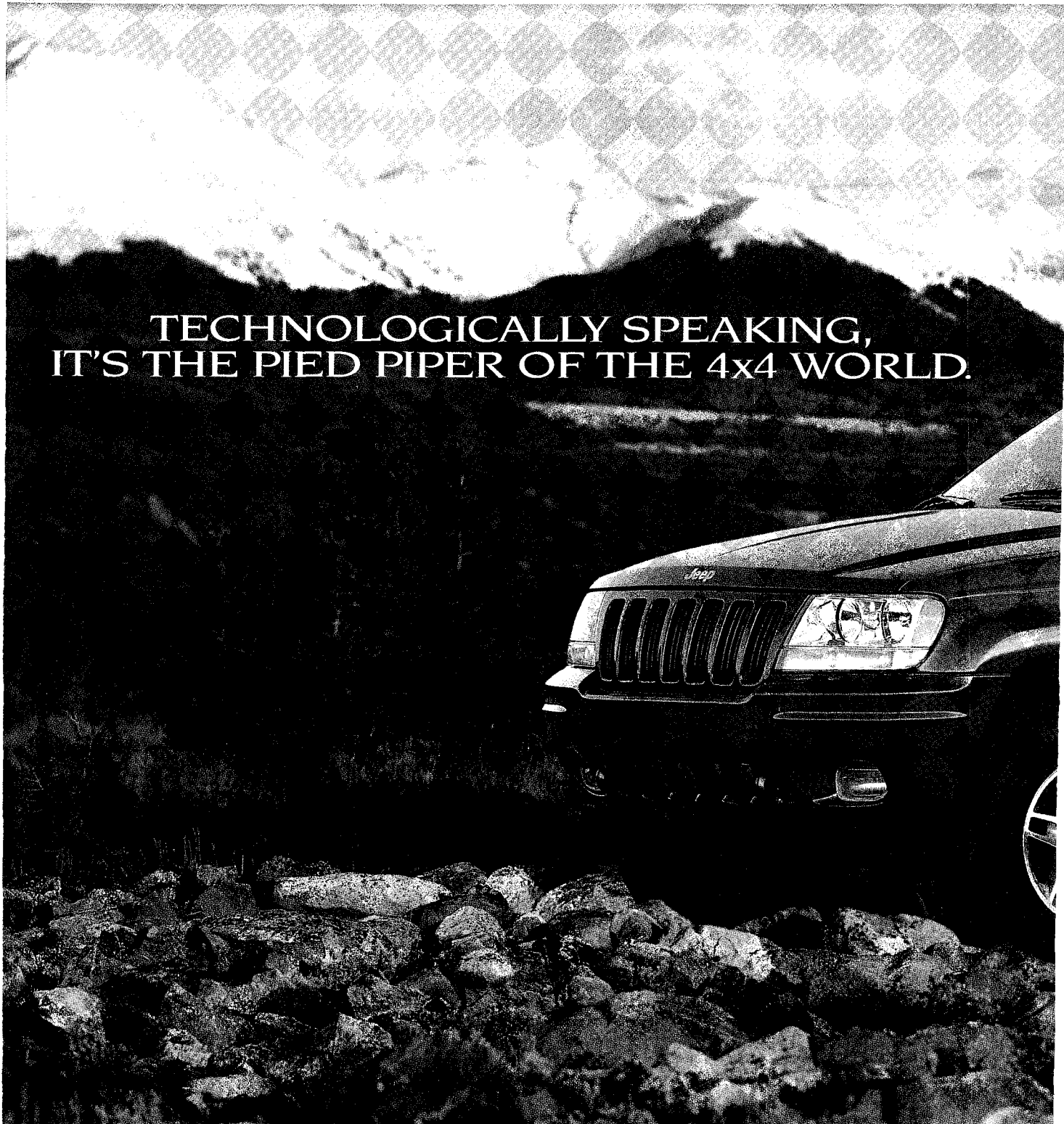
cal voice ensure results as illuminating as they are bewitching—not least for the orchestra, which includes some of the most promising young instrumentalists from conservatories around the world, all summering as students at the Aspen Music School. Music, more than most disciplines, is a communal affair, in which masters and emerging talents refresh one another's art. Certainly it is so in Aspen, where those who by day are students and faculty meet by night, in performance, as fellow musicians in the orchestra. Any lack of experience on the part of the junior members is compensated for by their joy of discovery—which in turn fires up such maestros as Yuri Temirkanov, James Conlon, and

James Conlon conducts



James Levine, himself an Aspen alumnus, returning this summer after an absence of twenty-five years. Heaven is the destination in Mahler's cosmic *Symphony No. 3*, and for the audience, Levine's account (August 1) is bound to be tremendous. For the orchestra, it should be something more.

Austin Baer is a writer based in New York.



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Dance and Theater

BY NANCY DALVA AND JOHN ISEL



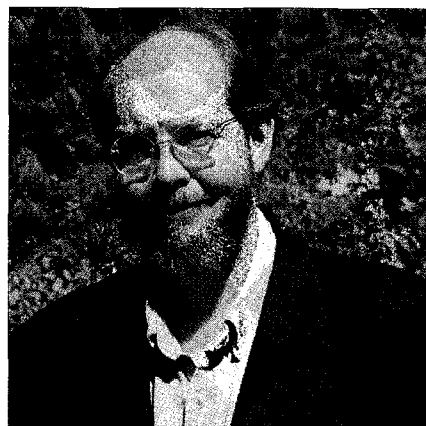
WILD THINGS

One fine day almost thirty years ago a merry band of superathletic Dartmouth guys—inspired by their comely teacher, Alison Becker Chase, got together in a New England cow pasture and gave a dance performance. Their choreography process was communal. Their spirit was antic (they have always, for instance, liked to take off their clothes). Their momentum was fabulous. They got another female (more on her shortly) and decided to call themselves Pilobolus (after an indigenous fungus). The rest is, believe it or not, dance history. Never forsaking their weird blend of the surreal and the merry, to say nothing of the cerebral and the silly, the originals grew their company into a popular and critical success. Still communal after all these years (though less so; there are now recognizable choreographic personalities, and credited works), this is a group that appeals to cognoscenti and to the uninitiated. You don't have to like dance to like Pilobolus, but it doesn't hurt. This month the company appears at the American Dance Festival, in Durham, N.C. (June 22-26; tickets 919-684-4444; for more information about the festival call 919-684-6402). The gig includes a major collaboration with the children's-book wizard Maurice Sendak. Looking again at his wonderful *Where the Wild Things Are*, one can see that Sendak's creatures and the original Pilobolites have much in common. Their union should produce something marvelous. (The piece is also scheduled for the company's subsequent run at the Joyce Theater, in New York City, July 5-30.) Meanwhile, Pilobolus is preceded at ADF (June 17-19) by Martha Clarke, that other woman they got to join them. Greatly gifted and long out on her own in the worlds of theater, dance, and opera (hers is a sensibility both painterly and literary), she is presenting a piece based on stories by Anton Chekhov, called *Vers la flamme*. I've never seen a piece of hers that wasn't memorable and beautiful. —N.D.

A NINETEENTH-CENTURY KNOCKOUT

Jeffrey Hatcher's plays thrive where most good theater does these days: on the margins of the mainstream imagination. Hollywood gave us the middlebrow epic *Titanic*. Hatcher gave us a quirky three-character play, *Scotland Road*, about a woman found floating on an iceberg eighty-five years after the great ship went down, who may or may not be a survivor. Now Hatcher has come up with *Sockdology*, which will be given its world premiere at the Alabama Shakespeare Festival this month. Again Hatcher takes an elliptical approach to a well-covered event: the assassination of Abraham Lincoln at Ford's Theatre. The

dramatist focuses on the players' lives backstage, concocting a comic structure as sophisticated as the company's offering that fateful night—*Our American Cousin*—is hackneyed. The play works on myriad levels: as a postmodern melodrama with black-coated villains and vital plot-turning props; as a mystery exploring who in the cast is part of the conspiracy; and as a



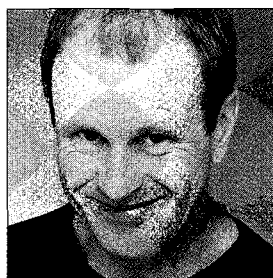
The playwright Jeffrey Hatcher

paean to the vanished nineteenth-century theater, with its preening actors who are both valorized and vilified. It's a theatrical confection whose wallop is more whimsical than its title: "sockdology" is "a boxing term," according to one character. "It means a finishing blow. A knockout. The brutal end of everything." —J.I.

Nancy Dalva's essays appear in the magazine twice. John Isel is the editor-in-chief of Stagebill.

SEND IN THE CLOWN

Working in classic commedia fashion, the clown Geoff Hoyle and his "midwife"—as the director Tony Taccone dubs himself—give birth to antic entertainments that are hard to categorize. "I would call it clown ballet," says Taccone, the artistic director of the Berkeley Repertory Theatre, where the duo's latest opus, *The First Hundred Years*, runs through July 10. Never mind the labels. Hoyle has been entertaining Bay Area audiences since the seventies, when, as "Mr. Sniff," he clowned with Bill Irwin in the Pickle Family Circus. Dedicated to raising circus arts to just plain art, they were in the vanguard of the new vaudeville movement. Subsequently Taccone started Hoyle's legit career when he cast him in a Dario Fo farce. (Recently Hoyle played Zazu in *The Lion King* on Broadway.) *The First Hundred Years* promises darker shades of hilarity than *Boomer!* and *Geni(us)*, two previous original creations. The premise is that an aging clown has made his home in a condemned theater, surrounded by the detritus of his life. Refusing to be evicted, he resists with all his might even as his theater begins to be razed. Taccone sees Beckettian overtones: "It's a little like Buster Keaton meets *Krapp's Last Tape*." —J.I.



Geoff Hoyle clowns around

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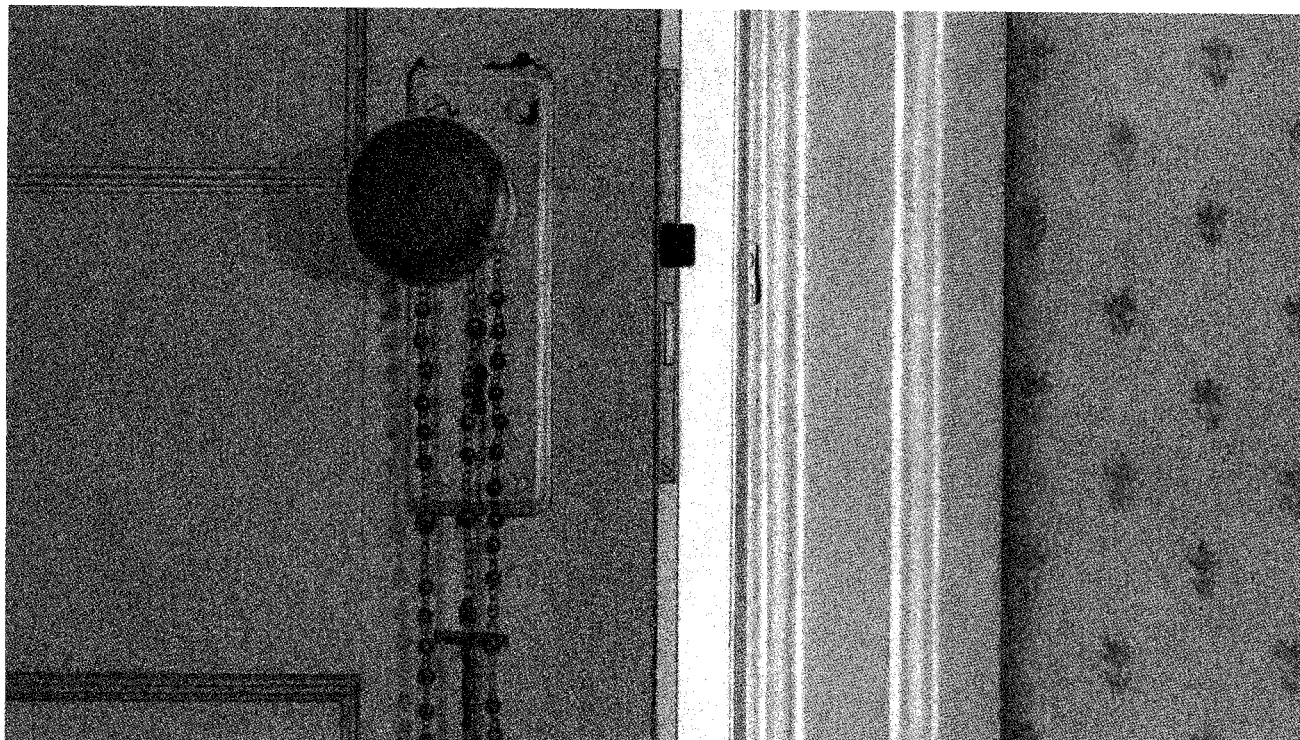


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Two Deaths in Rathmines

A memory of loss from the distant Dublin childhood of the writer and former diplomat

THE year after my father's death, on Christmas Day of 1927, was the saddest and loneliest of my life to date. Up to that day life had been a great deal of fun, owing mainly to my father's lively good humor (despite his long illness), his keen intelligence, and his loving attention to me. On the afternoon of Christmas Day, 1927, when I learned that my father was dead, life abruptly ceased to be fun. Fun did not return for more than a year, and then it came back only slowly.

The disaster began midmorning, when I went to my father's bedroom—to which he was confined by illness—to receive his

present, a bow and arrow. He greeted me with his usual cheerfulness, and sat up to bend the bow. As he bent it, he suddenly turned deathly pale and fell back on the pillow. My mother must have known that he was dying, but I didn't. She

sent me to fetch my aunt Mary, who lived about

a mile and a half away. I ran all the way and found Mary at her door, about to leave for mass. I asked her to come at once, because my father was seriously ill. She was worried about missing mass, but when I pressed her, she came. We walked in silence, and she seemed preoccupied. When we arrived at the house, I learned

that my father was dead. I also became aware that my mother and my aunt were consumed with what to do next. They sent me away while they talked. They talked for about fifteen minutes. Then my aunt Mary left, in an aura of strong disapproval, and without taking leave of me.

No one ever told me what was said in that discussion, but I can make a pretty good guess. Mary would have insisted that a priest should have been sent for, and should be sent for even now. My mother knew that whatever she personally might feel about the matter, my father—who took his agnosticism more seriously than other Irish agnostics did—did not want a priest to be sent for, and so my mother did not send for a priest.

So Mary left, in high dudgeon. My mother then retired to her room, "roaring crying," and remained there for the rest of that afternoon. During those hours my grief-stricken mother seemed entirely to have forgotten my existence. It was as if I had lost both parents, not just one. I remember sitting in the dining room contemplating the long, shiny mahogany table, and feeling that everything that made life worth living was gone forever.

The evening brought a considerable relief, with the arrival at 44 Leinster Road, Rathmines, of Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington

by **Conor Cruise O'Brien**

Here are the keys to Steve Brown's success.

As a teacher and musician, Steve Brown wanted his special needs students to experience the joy of playing an instrument. But sheet music written specially for those with learning disabilities didn't exist.

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For bringing the magic of music to his students, State Farm is pleased to present Steve Brown with our Good Neighbor Award and to donate a total of \$5,000 to the Jefferson School library in Johnston City, Illinois and the local chapter of the Council for Exceptional Children.

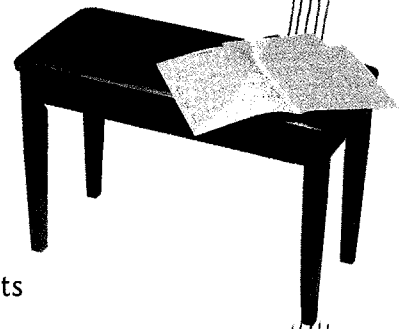
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and her teenaged son, Owen. The Skeffingtons, being agnostics of strict observance, were supportive of my mother in her decision not to send for a priest, and they were aware of what that decision must have cost her, and determined to help. Also, they were aware of my desolation, and Owen, in particular, was determined to bring me such consolation and comfort as he could. All in all, after more than seventy years now, I remember that mercy mission with deep gratitude. If the conditions of that terrible afternoon had lasted much longer, I believe I would have been psychologically impaired for life.

As it was, the Skeffingtons took us both back to their house. They sedated my mother—as I now think—and put her to bed. They fed me (I think my first meal of that day), and Owen put on a magic-lantern show for me. I remember laughing, not because the show was particularly funny but out of gratitude for being alive again.

I wasn't, as I soon found, quite out of the woods yet. On I think our third night at the Skeffingtons' my aunt Hanna called on me, in order to rebuke me in an icy

manner that she used occasionally and effectively. My misbehavior, she said, was making things more difficult for my mother. Keeping the light on and reading in bed was part of the misbehavior. She then turned the light off and closed the door, leaving me in the dark, feeling somewhat stunned.

Fortunately for me, this didn't last long. About five minutes later the door opened again and Owen came in. Without comment he put the light on. He said good-night and closed the door. I waited to see whether Hanna would return. She did not. I now knew that I had a protector, and that he was the strongest personality in the family. I put out the light and slept well that night.

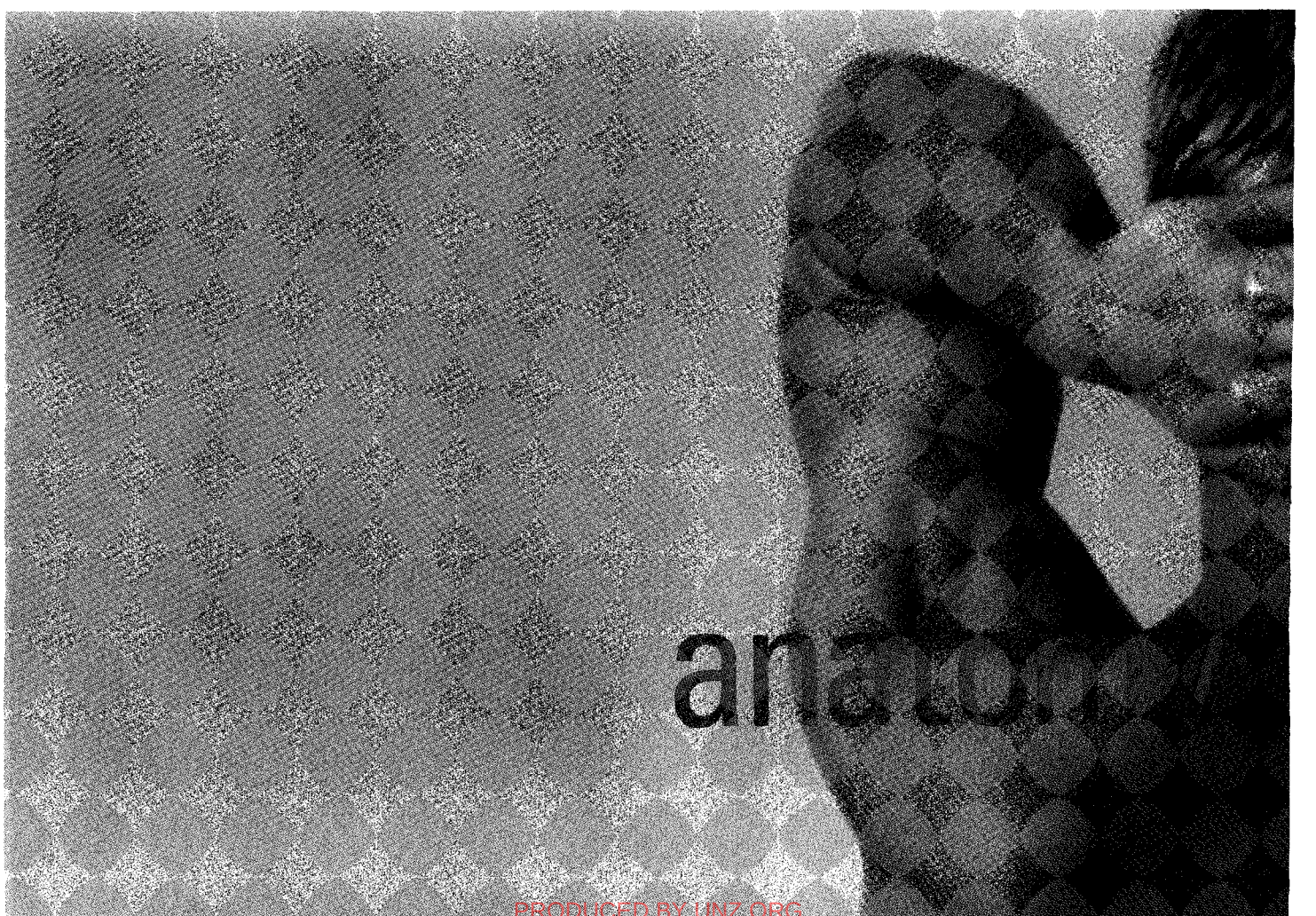
Years afterward, when I first heard of the Enlightenment, I thought gratefully of Owen turning on that light.

AFTER a few days with the Skeffingtons my mother and I returned to 44 Leinster Road to pick up the pieces as best we could. We loved each other, always, but were desperately lonely together at this time, in our own ways.

Let me begin with my mother's end of it, as I dimly apprehended it at the time. I believe I understand it more clearly now. There was first of all an overwhelming sense of loss, by reason of my father's death. My father's portrait, by Frances Baker (a pupil of John B. Yeats, the father of W.B. and Jack), hung at that time on the wall of her bedroom, and she used to kiss it every night before going to bed. That portrait hangs now in my home in Howth, Co. Dublin.

If straightforward grief had been all, that might not have been too bad. But it wasn't all. There was guilt as well. A few days after my father's death I noticed on the table beside my mother's bed a Catholic devotional work, *In Heaven We Know Our Own*, by a certain Father Blot, S.J. When I saw this, I knew it boded no good, either for my mother or for myself.

While my father had been around, there had been no devotional literature in our house. It was understood that my mother went to mass and would probably continue to do so indefinitely (as she did). It was also understood that I would go to mass along with her until I made my first com-



anatom

munion. After that I would continue to go to mass for as long as I considered appropriate. My father did not expect that that would be very long, and neither did I. At one point—I think in the month before my father's death—a woman friend of my mother's brought me as a birthday present a Catholic missal. In thanking her I said, in a rather stilted dictation acquired from my father, "It will relieve the tedium of the mass." My mother repeated this mot to my father, who was delighted with it.

That was then, when we were all quite lighthearted. Now was quite another matter. My mother was under pressure from the Catholic Church about me and about my father, and about Sandford Park, the school I was going to attend. I underestimated my mother during this period, thinking she was about to give in to the pressure and send me to a Catholic school, in order to abridge or otherwise mitigate my father's time of suffering in purgatory.

I was wrong about how my mother would react to the pressure, but I was right about the nature of the pressure that was being applied to her. It was

Owen who caught hold of what would be called at another place and time the smoking gun. Owen gave me no warning of what he had found, but he addressed a family gathering about it. The formal word "addressed" about fits the tone in which Owen spoke to the family on this occasion.

In the period after my father's death our extended family—consisting then of my mother, my aunts Hanna and Mary, and their children, Owen, Betty Kettle, and me—used to meet regularly on Sunday evenings for tea at my mother's house. Generally the elders—mainly Hanna and Mary—did almost all the talking, and the children listened. Not even Owen was usually heard from. On this occasion, however, he had something he wanted to tell us, and there was dead silence among the listeners.

Owen told us that his close friend Christopher Gore-Grimes—"Christo," as he was generally called—had just been withdrawn from Sandford Park, which he had been attending along with Owen. Christo's father, like mine, had been an agnostic (also of Catholic ori-

gin), and Christo had gone to Sandford Park by his father's decision, just as I was about to do. So why did his mother withdraw him? This was the point of the story, as we all could sense. Owen spoke very slowly and deliberately at this stage. Christo's mother—a Catholic, like mine—had withdrawn her son from Sandford Park because her confessor had told her that every day her son spent at that school was extending the period of her late husband's suffering in purgatory. Owen stopped right there: he had no need to say any more. There was a long silence—the longest silence ever experienced around our family table.

During the silence I looked around at the three grown-ups. My mother looked shaken but, I thought, a bit relieved as well, by something coming into the open that had been bottled up too long. Mary looked flustered—unusual for her—and, I thought, a bit guilty. Hanna, alone of the three, looked completely calm, and even serene—something she was good at when she knew she was on a winner. Looking at her, and looking at Owen, I could tell that Hanna—unlike my mother and Mary—



had known exactly what Owen was going to say, and had agreed to his saying it. I knew that Mary was being warned off the subject of my education. She was being told, implicitly, that the Skeffingtons believed that she had been abetting, and thereby increasing, the clerical pressure on my mother not to send me to Sandford Park. And I knew that a joint warning, from both Skeffingtons, was enough to resolve this matter. Mary was quite a strong character on her own, but she stood a bit in awe of Hanna. And she was altogether outgunned when Hanna and Owen acted in concert, as on this occasion. Hanna and Owen didn't always agree—they didn't agree at all, for example, about the IRA. But regarding clerical interference with my education they were very much in agreement. They were presenting Mary with an ultimatum, with which I knew she would have to comply. She would have to stop abetting—if she was abetting—the clerical blackmail of my mother to place me in a Catholic school. That was very much to the good in this dark time. I would be educated in accordance with my father's wishes, and my mother was not to

be tormented about the matter any longer.

I have often wondered since whether Mary actually had been a party to the clerical pressure on my mother. I would prefer to think not, because I liked her, in spite of a few bad trips, and I remembered her spirited anticlerical performance in the slaying of Canon Hatton, whom she had spectacularly defied over the schooling of the poor in her parish. Her defiance was immediately followed by the canon's collapse from a stroke, of which he died. But that had been a clash over essentially secular matters: class and education. My father's fate in purgatory, as determined by the place of my education, was a different matter altogether. I understood this to be strictly theological, a matter of the *depositum fidei*, the deposit of faith. The theologians *knew* what was happening out there, and no good Catholic—however "anticlerical" on secular matters—could go against them.

So I believe Aunt Mary did put pressure on my mother, and did much to make her life a misery, in the period before Owen's intervention. She would have seen herself as actually helping my

mother, by abridging the period of her separation from her husband and of her husband's torment in purgatory, and hastening the blissful day of their reunion forever in heaven.

THINGS got better between my mother and me after the Skeffington intervention, but they were still quite fraught. As a matter of fact, they had become a bit fraught even during my father's lifetime. There had been a tiny incident lasting only a few seconds, which seared me at the time, and the memory of which has occasionally returned to haunt me even in my maturity and old age.

The little episode began as one of exceptional bliss, which turned to horror in a second. I must have been about seven at the time, and my father, who worked late on his newspaper, had returned from work somewhat earlier than usual. When he turned in, I was in bed between my mother and father, something that had never happened before. I felt so happy and secure that I did a kind of somersault in the air. Unfortunately, as I did so, my nightshirt fell forward over my head, ex-

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posing my naked body. Apparently my mother found this spectacle revolting. She spoke to me with sharp disgust, in a tone she had never used with me before, telling me to cover myself immediately. I felt as if I had been hit by an icy blast in a moment of joy and security. I cowered under the sheets. My father spoke in a calm, cheerful tone about some neutral matter. I was grateful to my father for changing the subject. But I wondered about my mother. Why should she make me miserable all of a sudden?

Years later, listening to my mother talk with her sisters—cheerfully enough—about their youthful convent experiences, I could understand the roots of her reaction. They had all been conditioned in the convent to a horror of exposing the person, as a probable occasion of mortal sin. My mother told a relevant story. As she walked down a corridor, a shortsighted elderly nun stopped her and peered at her chest. “Is that your person?” the nun asked, in a tone of horror.

“No, Mother,” my mother said. “It’s a slip.”

“Slip” and “shift” were terms used to

designate a female undergarment. In Catholic and sexually puritan Ireland these terms could be fraught with explosive emotions. It was the use of one of these terms which precipitated the riot in the Abbey Theatre, in Dublin, at the opening performance of J. M. Synge’s *The Playboy of the Western World*. “Audience broke up in disorder at the word shift,” Lady Gregory cabled to Yeats. My mother’s encounter with the elderly nun must have occurred very near the time of the *Playboy* riots (1907). The term “slip” may have only recently come into use at the time, because the elderly nun seems not to have understood the word as a reference to an undergarment.

“A slip?” the nun said. “Well, don’t let it occur again.”

Quite a funny story. But the conditioning it represented was not always funny in its consequences, as I found when my shirt fell over my head.

The faint mistrust of my mother that dated from that little episode deepened on the afternoon of the day my father died. We should have been trying to comfort each other, I thought, but my mother

was distracted by grief, leaving me with that awful table. I didn’t then understand that my mother was under clerical pressure as well as that of simple grief.

As I look back on it now, it seems to me that my mother’s resistance to that emotional blackmail and terror, and her unbending compliance with her husband’s wishes, constituted a notable example of heroic virtue and fortitude. But that was not how these matters looked to me that Christmas afternoon, as I contemplated that table and felt, for several hours, that I had lost not just one parent but both.

IN the summer of my second year at Trinity College, Dublin, while I was living in rooms there, my mother had a stroke at home. When I heard of her illness, I ran from Trinity to the house in Rathmines. Later I could see that a tram would have taken me there quicker. I think there was a subconscious desire to re-enact, in a way, my run on the morning of my father’s death to my aunt Mary’s house. When I arrived, my mother was unconscious and breathing very heavily; she never recovered consciousness. ☼

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The Wild New West

*Daredevils, coots, and cowboy poets
love Moab, Utah—and so does at least one
all-American family*

MOAB, in the isolated high desert of southeastern Utah, is half Old West, half yuppie mecca. The swath of red-rock canyons and snowy mountains that surrounds it, the novelist and radical environmentalist Edward Abbey wrote in 1975, forms “the heart of the heart of the American West.” This was among the last parts of the continental United States to be “civilized,” with the first permanent white settlements not appearing until well after the Civil War, in the 1870s. Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, the Hole in the Wall Gang, and the Wild Bunch rode to hideouts around here after robbing the silver-laden bank vaults of Colorado mining towns.

by **Thomas E. Ricks**

Over the past fifteen years Moab has boomed again as an R&R area, but now the crowd is tamer: middle-class Americans inclined toward extreme sports. Mountain biking caught on early here, during the 1980s, and these days people come from all over the country and the world to pedal across the rolling swells of “slickrock” sandstone—huge petrified sand dunes—just east of town. Visitors also head out for off-road exploring in four-wheel-drive vehicles, and for rock climbing, hiking in the desert, and kayaking and rafting on the intimidating rapids of the Colorado River. A few brave souls even leap from cliffs wearing parachutes, and occasionally get blown by desert gusts into the cliff faces.

This concentration of adrenaline-generating activity has made Moab cutting-edge cool—the reason its environs have been appearing in so many advertisements for automobiles, designer clothes, and cigarettes. A couple of years ago the software firm Novell confirmed the area’s celebrity when it code-named its newest network operating system “Moab.”

In the online mountain-biking magazine *BikeSite*, Geff Hinds questions whether Moab has become

- A.) Totally over-hyped
- B.) Your favorite place on Earth
- C.) Yuppie heaven
- D.) Not what it used to be

The correct answer is, of course, All of the above.

Moab, with a population of 5,000 or so, is in some ways a town of contending tribes: cattle ranchers, aging hippies, intense younger bikers and rafters, and a few burnt-out miners from the 1950s uranium boom. The only thing that seems to bind the freewheeling citizenry together is an opposition to Utah’s prevailing Mormon ethos. Up in northern Utah, the Mormon heartland, I drove by a restaurant offering “Free meals for departing missionaries”; in Moab the Taco Bell advertises “Free taco with every Jeep rollover.”

This might seem to be an unlikely place for my family to fall in love with—me, a middle-aged Washington reporter; my wife, Mary Kay, who isn’t inclined toward roughing it; and our son and daughter, thirteen and eight at the time of our last visit, who have wildly different interests. But Moab’s mixed culture provided a lively background for a week-long visit—our third trip to Moab in four years. People who want to research the town in advance of visiting will find www.moab-utah.com and a competing Web site without a hyphen in the middle of its name good places to start. There are dozens more sites for bikers, boaters, and off-road-vehicle drivers, and even one for fans of dinosaur tracks. You can pay homage at the Edward Abbey shrine at www.utsidan.se/abbey. At the low-tech end, I also found useful

Canyonlands National Park

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the pamphlets handed out at the Moab Visitor Center, at the corner of Center and Main—call 800-635-6622 to request them from out of town. The pamphlet listing “Moab Area Movie Locations,” for example, can direct you to the spot southwest of town where Max von Sydow delivered the Sermon on the Mount in *The Greatest Story Ever Told*.

WE began, as everyone does in Moab, by heading for the hills. The enduring attraction of the town is the more than two million acres of govern-

lowed a narrow trail up between sheer red-rock walls perhaps 500 feet high, crisscrossing the icy-cold stream that runs through the bottom. We stopped on a broad sandstone shelf to picnic on chicken-and-cashew salad from the surprisingly cosmopolitan City Market grocery store. Canyon wrens flew overhead, warbling their descending song. At the end of the day we made our way back to town, amid hordes of dusty mountain bikers.

Regrettably, not everyone manages that last, unremarkable feat. In 1997 park rangers and the local search-and-rescue

River near Moab, and four rock climbers were killed on the cliffs. Some years ago a motorcyclist apparently misjudged his location and raced over the edge of a 400-foot cliff, diving into the Colorado River. Green said his team calls such debacles “doing a *Thelma and Louise*.” In the 1991 movie the two women supposedly drove into the Grand Canyon, but actually the scene was filmed just outside Moab, below Dead Horse Point, one of my favorite spots in the area, where my kids once stood and blew bubbles into the 2,000-foot-deep canyon.

All that mayhem places the recreation here solidly in the American tradition. “Freedom, not safety, is the highest good,” Edward Abbey advised in his cult novel *The Monkey Wrench Gang*. In the 1950s and 1960s Abbey worked intermittently as a ranger in Arches National Park, just north of town, and in some ways he remains the presiding spirit of the area. In *Desert Solitaire*, a Thoreau-like memoir of the time he spent in that park, he elaborated on the same thought: “Let them take risks, for God’s sake, let them get lost, sunburnt, stranded, drowned, eaten by bears, buried alive un-



Overlooking Dead Horse Point, and blooming claret cup cactus

ment-owned land around it, in two national parks (Arches and Canyonlands) and also in huge empty parcels overseen by the federal Bureau of Land Management. Much of the landscape consists of leaping sandstone cliffs and deep canyons. All of it is beautiful—the boundaries of the national parks are arbitrary distinctions, frequently having been drawn for political rather than aesthetic reasons.

Our first excursion was a “stroll” (our luxury-loving daughter was suspicious of the word “hike”) up Hunter Canyon, a few miles southwest of Moab. In any other part of the country this would be a local must-see site, set aside at least as a state park. Here it is just one more beautiful slot canyon among hundreds. We fol-

lowed a narrow trail up between sheer red-rock walls perhaps 500 feet high, crisscrossing the icy-cold stream that runs through the bottom. We stopped on a broad sandstone shelf to picnic on chicken-and-cashew salad from the surprisingly cosmopolitan City Market grocery store. Canyon wrens flew overhead, warbling their descending song. At the end of the day we made our way back to town, amid hordes of dusty mountain bikers. Regrettably, not everyone manages that last, unremarkable feat. In 1997 park rangers and the local search-and-rescue team performed 146 rescues around Moab. According to county records, mountain bikers accounted for more than half the search-and-rescue calls, and their problems tended to be less than catastrophic—mainly dehydration and abrasions. “The sprocketheads take out a two-thousand-dollar bike, but they don’t bring water or a fanny pack with survival gear,” I was told by Deputy Sheriff Kent Green, a member of the rescue team and an accomplished rock climber, kayaker, motorcyclist, and horseman. Other sports result in fewer calls but more-lethal situations: in 1997 five people drowned on the Colorado



der avalanches—that is the right and privilege of any free American.”

Perhaps swayed by Abbey, I took my family on a camping trip. We set out with a rented tent and sleeping bags for Kane Springs Canyon, just south of the Colorado River. Unfortunately, we picked the wrong night. As the sun set and the canyon went dark, the wind began to

howl. We managed to pitch our tent only by having the kids stack rocks on its corners to hold it down while we worked. By midnight the winds had picked up to thirty-five miles an hour. When a gust hit, it sounded like someone was whacking the outside of the tent with a Wiffle bat. Throughout the night the wind forced a fine drizzle of sand through the tent's seams, a fact the wakeful children pointed out several times, illuminating the descending plumes in their flashlight beams. At three in the morning I found myself meditating on the sandstorm scene from *The English Patient*. At seven my wife strongly recommended that we cut our losses and head into town for coffee and hot showers.

Thereafter we slept in our by-the-week rental apartment, located just down the street from a small ostrich farm. (Ostriches make quiet neighbors.) At last I understood why the second-story gutters of our apartment contained a thick layer of red sand. To prove that we could learn from experience, we canceled a planned whitewater rafting trip on the Colorado when April snow flurries were forecast.

Instead our next excursion was under the wing of lanky Lin Ottinger, who with his gapped teeth, wispy white hair, and "International Tesla Society" cap looks like exactly what he is: a septuagenarian uranium prospector, rock hound, and desert coot. We spent a full day with him as he showed the kids how to crack open rocks to find fossils and how to crawl to the edge of vertigo-inducing cliffs. He also—repeatedly—showed us how he could take both hands off the wheel when he wanted to emphasize what he was saying as he sped along a dirt road next to a 500-foot drop. He had celebrated his most recent birthday, he told me, by buying a kind of ultralight aircraft that he calls a "powered parachute" and learning to fly it without taking any lessons but, rather, just circling 2,000 feet above Moab.

Driving back to town after a day of wandering the desert canyons, I'd tune into KZMU-FM, one of the most erratic radio stations I've ever encountered. The children didn't badger me to switch to another station, because we couldn't find any others. After one hike we heard an "Ode to Che Guevara." Another time Paul Robeson's struggle against racism and imperialism was discussed—and then came an equally heartfelt tribute to

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Join a discussion with Corby Kummer—whose March *Atlantic* article, "Doing Good by Eating Well," described the urgency of saving rare, home-grown ingredients—and chef Castro on how to find and use wonderful and unusual foods to create an extraordinary meal like this one.

MONDAY • JULY 26

Hemingway 100

In celebration of the 100th birthday of Ernest Hemingway, *The Atlantic Monthly*'s senior editor C. Michael Curtis hosts a reading and discussion of Hemingway and his work. He will be joined by a panel of distinguished authors, critics, and special guests.



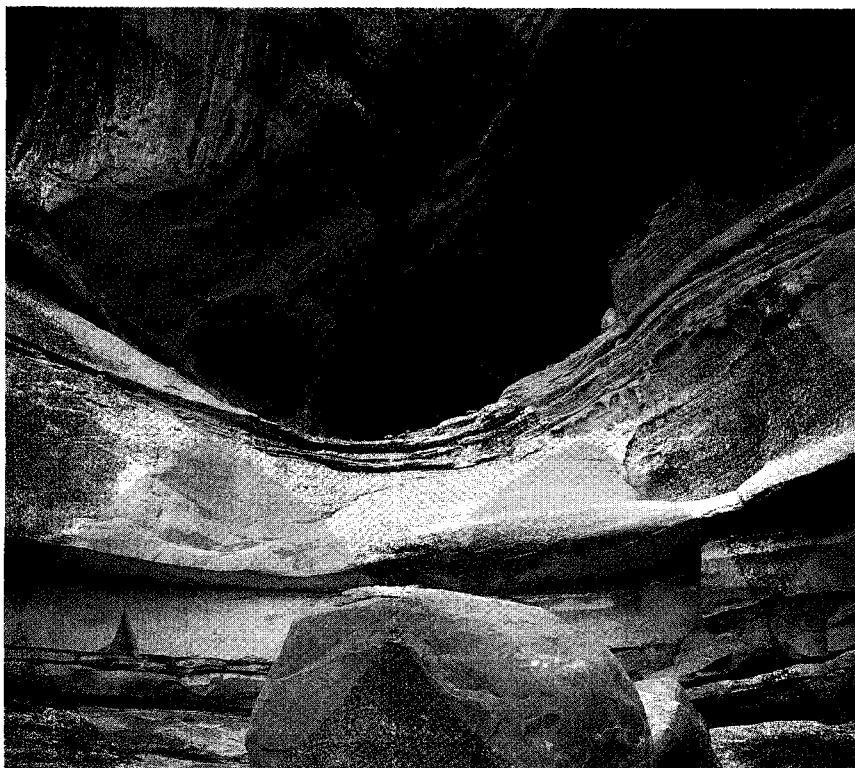
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Ancient Native American cliff dwellings amid the sandstone

the country singer Merle Haggard on his birthday. Most of the time KZMU is an oldies station for aging hippies, playing Van Morrison, Ray Charles, the Rolling Stones—fine music to hear at day's end as one limps back to Moab for a microbrew.

THE restaurants in Moab were surprisingly spotty, given the deep pockets of many extreme-sports fans. Apparently, when those bikers, hikers, climbers, jeepers, and jumpers come in from the desert at night, most are looking for a cold drink and hot carbohydrates, not a memorable meal. With two exceptions, the best thing in town was the beer at the brew pubs. The exceptions were the Center Cafe and Buck's Grill House. At the Center Cafe, Mary Kay and I were particularly impressed by the ravioli stuffed with sweet potato and goat cheese and the grilled beef tenderloin with garlic mashed potatoes. (The children had been happy to stay back at the apartment and watch television.) Our waiter, Howard Newmark, turned out to be an accomplished desert photographer—it was his work that I had been admiring on the restaurant's walls. He told us that the boom in Moab had made him consider moving to Escalante, on the west side of the Colorado River canyon.

I thought of Huck Finn lighting out for the territories, wary of Aunt Sally's intentions to "civilize" him.

Buck's Grill House was more unusual and also more interesting, serving a cuisine I had never come upon before: gourmet western. Kids in tow, we enjoyed a quesadilla with buffalo chorizo; the thickest and sweetest pork chop I've ever tasted; and a buffalo-meatloaf sandwich garnished with tomato and a creamy onion sauce and served on biscuit-style bread.

Probably for the same reason that it doesn't have many good restaurants, Moab so far has managed to avoid the Ralph Laurenization that has taken over the downtowns of other western tourist spots such as Jackson, Wyoming, and Santa Fe, New Mexico. There are no shopping outlets and few art galleries. Visitors are likely to devote their evenings to recovering from sunburn and abrasions, repairing their bikes and jeeps, and quaffing microbrews. In the days before Easter, when the town's population doubles for "Jeep Safari," long lines build up every afternoon at the auto-parts store.

TO my surprise, the children were particularly taken with a brief excursion to Dalton Wells, a somber spot fourteen miles north of Moab. In 1943

the federal government shipped here forty-four Japanese-American internees who had been designated troublemakers at wartime relocation camps in California and Arizona. Not much but a few trees now remains of "DG-32," their isolation camp. In a cold spring wind, under cloudy skies, the place seemed terribly lonesome. At the base of a sickly-green uranium-bearing cliff we looked out on striking views—notably of the LaSal Mountains, twenty-five miles to the south, and of Book Cliffs, one of the world's longest escarpments, about twenty-five miles to the north. The place gave me the creeps.

The next day dawned sunny and bright, and was spent on what turned out to be our favorite activity of the week: a hike (by now my daughter no longer needed the word "stroll" to cajole her) up a spectacular slot canyon to a Native American cliff dwelling. We had hired as our guide Rory Tyler, who seems to reconcile within himself some of Moab's conflicts. He is at home with the heavily caffeinated mountain-biker crowd, yet he is also a cowboy poet, a vocation he takes quite seriously. Tying in another of the town's strands, he hosts a current-events talk show on KZMU. Indeed, he was the person who first explained Moab to me as an uneasy collection of tribes.

The entire hike up the pretty, waterfall-laden canyon was on federal land administered by the Bureau of Land Management, whose maps depict the area as nothing special, as if it were simply a few more acres of pastureland. Tyler introduced us to the natural history of the place, pointing out the yucca, the purple vetch flower, and the four-wing saltbush. The kids hung on his words as he told us about the local tribes who depended on Indian rice grass. Then, heading up the canyon, he zigged to a corner to show us a string of thousand-year-old petroglyphs. Finally, as we sat on the lip of an ancient Native American cave, high above the canyon, eating our lunch and watching a brief hailstorm, Tyler recited one of his works about a chili-struck wrangler's indigestion-driven nightmare of riding dinosaurs. "Jurassic Rodeo," he calls it. Tyler's vigorous, varied, and illuminating hike, with its beauty, its surprising turns through natural and human history, and that heartfelt cowboy poem at the end, struck us as a compendium of Moab. ☼



You always said you'd start

planning for the future when

you got your first job.

Then it was when you got married.

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Building Wealth

by LESTER C. THUROW

*The new rules for individuals, companies,
and nations*



THE old foundations of success are gone. For all of human history the source of success has been controlling natural resources—land, gold, oil. Suddenly the answer is “knowledge.” The king of the knowledge economy, Bill Gates, owns no land, no gold or oil, no industrial processes. How does one use knowledge to build wealth? How do societies have to be reorganized to generate a wealth-enhancing knowledge environment? How do they incubate the entrepreneurs necessary to bring about change and create wealth? What skills are needed? The knowledge-based economy is asking new questions, giving new answers, and developing new rules for success.

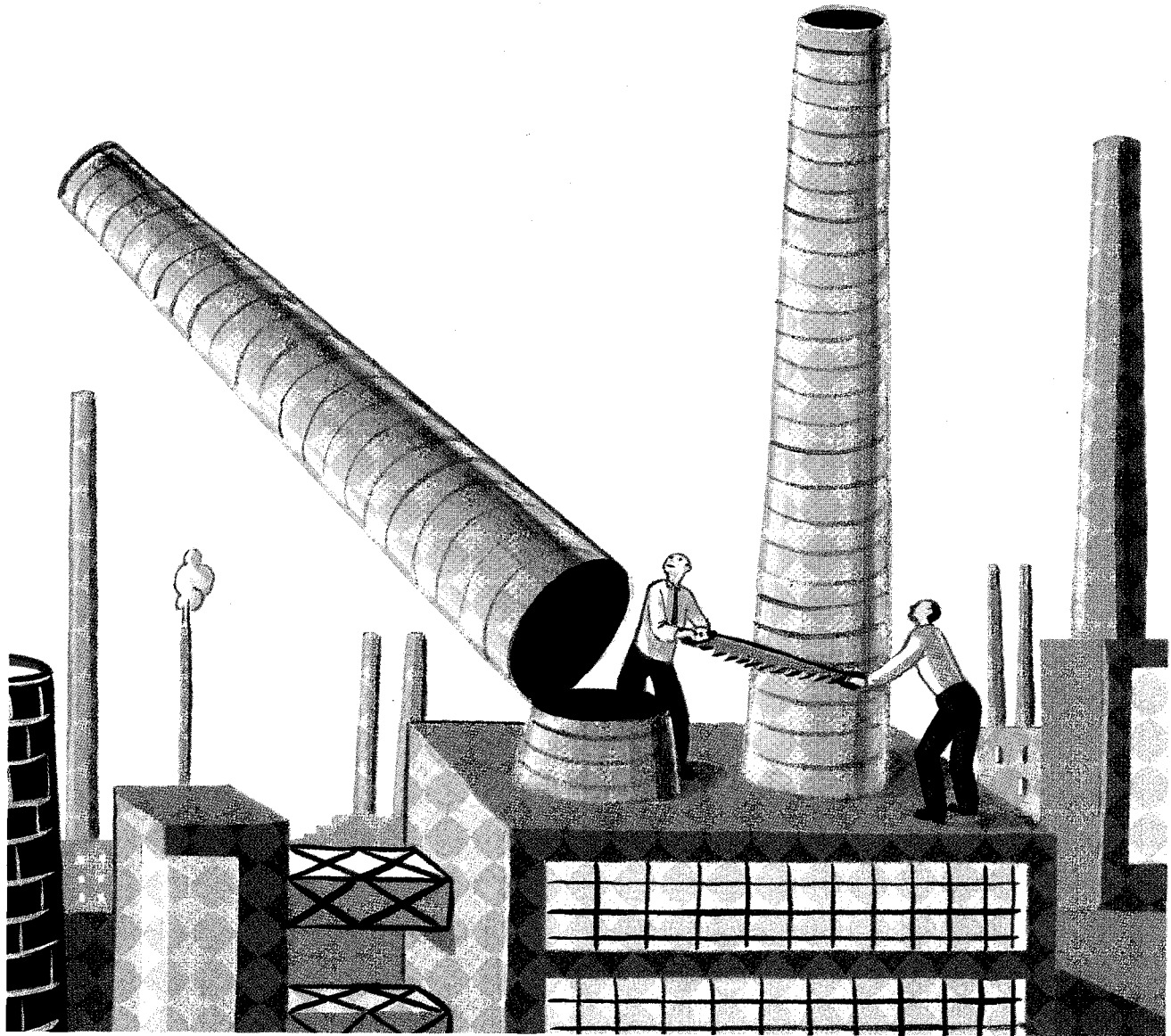
RULE #1

**No one ever becomes very rich
by saving money.**

THE rich see opportunities to work and invest in situations where great disequilibriums—imbalances or openings in the economy created by new circumstances—exist. Something, usually a new technology, has opened up opportunities to jump to new products with very different capabilities or to new processes with much higher levels of productivity. This was as true for John D. Rockefeller as it is

for Bill Gates. For both of them lifetime savings constituted a small fraction of total wealth. Carefully saving money and investing in normal equilibrium situations can make one comfortable in old age but never really wealthy.

In what will come to be seen as the third industrial revolution, new technological opportunities are creating fortunes faster than ever before. The United States has created more billionaires in the past fifteen years than in its previous history—even correcting for inflation and changes in average per capita gross domestic product. Bill Gates might spend close to \$100 million on his house and still have only the second most expensive house under construction in the Unit-



ed States. The thirteen billionaires of 1982 had by last fall been joined by 176 others. Together these 189 people have well over a trillion dollars in wealth. An additional two dozen people would have been on the list if the assessments had been made in July rather than October, and with the recovery in the stock market they were probably back on the list by the end of the year. To be among the fifty wealthiest Americans last year required a minimum of \$2.9 billion. The richest Americans don't hide their wealth; they actively seek to get their names on the list, and produce their financial records to prove that they belong there. They want to be seen as economic winners.

The slightly less wealthy exhibit their wealth in other ways. Conspicuous consumption is rising. Whereas since 1993 general consumption is up 29 percent, adventure travel is up 46 percent, sales of gourmet chocolates up 51 percent, pearls 73 percent, luxury cars 74 percent, and yachts 143 percent.

This wealth explosion isn't usual in America. In the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s the economy was growing much faster (twice as fast from 1950 to 1970 as from 1970 to 1998), and

average wealth was going up, but great wealth was not erupting. America did not suddenly give birth to a generation of superAmericans. Americans in the fifties, sixties, and seventies were no less talented, no less inventive, no less ambitious. Our political and economic systems—democracy and capitalism—were not different. The opportunities to become wealthy simply weren't there.

What we are seeing in America today was last seen in the 1890s, during the second industrial revolution. Two innovations were changing the nature of economic advancement then and opening up opportunities to build great wealth.

The first was the birth of the corporate research laboratory. In creating its chemical industry Germany established the concept of systematic industrial research and development. Technological advances did not just randomly happen; they could be systematically invented. Previously the economy had advanced on the brilliance of what we might call great entrepreneurial tinkers—James Watt, Henry Bessemer, Richard Arkwright. Technological advances were not closely coupled to scientific advances. Bessemer, for exam-

ple, never knew what chemistry made his blast furnace work. He just fiddled around until it worked.

Electricity was the other element behind the second industrial revolution. Electrification allowed a whole new set of industries to emerge (telephones, movies), and radically altered the production processes of every old industry. In the steam era a giant engine powered a central rotating shaft, and machine tools ran off pulleys in long linear factories. In the new electric model of production, small motors could be attached to each machine tool, and very different, more productive configurations of machinery could be arranged on the factory floor. It was an early industrial version of what is known today in the computer industry as distributive processing.

With the electric light bulb, night became day. The price-performance curve for the light bulb looked like the price-performance curve for today's computer. The lighting that can be had for thirty-three cents in a 100-watt bulb from Home Depot would have cost \$1,445 in 1883 (adjusted for lumens emitted, length of bulb life, inflation, and changes in per capita income).

Being able to do something after dark changed basic habits. People had slept an average of nine hours a night; now they slept slightly more than seven hours. With electricity came transportation systems—underground and street railways—that allowed the emergence of the modern metropolis. Electricity powered the telephone communication system that allowed small local markets to become big national markets.

The second industrial revolution created a sharp discontinuity in economic affairs and opened up opportunities to do things never done before. Old things could also be done in new ways. The smart and the lucky did not have to content themselves with highly competitive businesses producing commodities that earned bond-market “equilibrium” rates of return. In the jargon of economists, high “disequilibrium returns” replaced low “equilibrium returns.” America's first set of billionaires (in inflation-corrected dollars)—Rockefeller, Carnegie, Mellon, Morgan, Schwab—emerged.

Disequilibrium conditions always disappear eventually. New industries with high returns and high growth rates become old industries with much lower returns and normal growth rates. As technologies mature, costs stop falling faster than selling prices. Competitors arise to drive down selling prices. The new products reach saturation levels. Growth markets become replacement markets. But “eventually” often means several decades. It takes time to attract enough capital and people into new industries to turn them into mature industries with normal growth rates and normal rates of return. In the meantime, there are great fortunes to be made.

Although billionaires and market wealth dominate the headlines, there is another way to look at wealth creation that could generate a very different set of headlines if anyone wanted to pay attention. Real wealth is the ability to produce more with less—to generate a flow of goods and services

without having to sacrifice something else of equal value. It is not created by taking time away from other activities and devoting it to money-making. Real wealth can be created by increases in what economists call labor productivity: the same time spent working generates more income (and hence wealth) than it did in the past.

But wealth can also be created by investing in plant and equipment. If one sacrifices consumption in order to save and invest, the sacrifice must be subtracted from the flow of income from that investment. Real wealth is ultimately not created by taking income away from consumption and devoting it to investment; it flows from increases in capital productivity—getting more out of the same capital resources or using fewer capital resources to generate the same levels of market wealth.

RULE #2

**Sometimes successful businesses
have to cannibalize themselves to save
themselves.**

BUSINESSES must be willing to destroy the old while it is still successful if they wish to build the new that will become successful. If they don't destroy themselves, others will destroy them.

Disequilibrium means great threats as well as great opportunities. Only six of what had been the twenty-five biggest firms in 1960 were still on the list in 1997. Most had been merged into other companies, but two of the twenty-five had gone out of business. Of what were the twelve largest American companies at the beginning of the twentieth century, eleven will not be around to see the beginning of the twenty-first. Technological breakthroughs occur, the economic environment changes, and they could not adjust.

Old big firms understand, and often even invent, the new technologies that transform the world, but they have a structural problem that is almost impossible to solve. When breakthrough technologies come along, such firms must destroy the old to build the new. Four of the five makers of vacuum tubes, for example, never successfully made transistors after transistors emerged to replace the vacuum tube—and the fifth is today not a player. When the microprocessor allowed the personal computer to replace the mainframe as the dominant growth market in the computer industry, the old industrial leader, IBM, fell off a cliff, and new leaders, Intel and Microsoft, emerged. IBM understood the new technology and wanted to compete but could not destroy its old (mainframe) business to build the new. In the 1980s IBM sold its 20 percent stake in Intel; if it still owned that stake today, IBM's total market value would be almost 30 percent greater than it is.

New firms have the great advantage of not having to destroy themselves to save themselves.

RULE #3

Two routes other than radical technological change can lead to high-growth, high-rate-of-return opportunities: sociological disequilibriums and developmental disequilibriums.

ENTREPRENEURS see sociological opportunities to change human habits. Starbucks persuaded Americans to replace their fifty-cent cup of coffee bought at a local restaurant with a \$2.50 cup of coffee bought at a coffee bar. They turned a competitive commodity with widely distributed points of sale out of which no one made much money into a noncompetitive differentiated product, and created a rapidly growing industry with high rates of return from which great fortunes could emerge.

The cruise industry took advantage of a shift in demographics: the relative purchasing power of the elderly had doubled in two decades. Seventy-year-olds twenty years earlier had cash incomes 40 percent below those of thirty-year-olds; suddenly seventy-year-olds had cash incomes 20 percent above those of thirty-year-olds. Cruises, known at least since the days of Cleopatra, became the perfect vacation for the elderly: We move you; you don't move. Some owners of cruise lines have become billionaires by exploiting sociological disequilibriums.

The problem with wealth generated this way is that sociological disequilibriums usually reflect a transfer of existing wealth rather than the generation of new wealth. Those who were selling conventional cups of coffee now sell fewer of them, and thousands of mom-and-pop restaurants make less money. The extra two dollars a cup that goes to Starbucks is two dollars that isn't spent somewhere else.

What might be called developmental disequilibrium exists whenever countries or entrepreneurs can replicate the activities of the developed world in the underdeveloped world.

A year or so before the hand-over of Hong Kong from Britain to China, I was sitting in the lounge at the Hong Kong airport eavesdropping on a conversation between two rich Chinese businessmen on their way to spend six months in Vancouver in order to get Canadian passports—their insurance policy in case things went wrong in Hong Kong. They were complaining about having to stay so long in Vancouver, because they could see no way of using their time there to make money. To hear them describe it, Vancouver was an economic desert. Why? Vancouver, after all, is richer than Hong Kong.

The answer is to be found in the absence of developmental disequilibriums in Canada. In Hong Kong these businessmen had become rich by exploiting the differences between the developed world and poor, but now open, mainland China. They simply copied what was done in the developed world and replicated it in China. What were commodity operations with low rates of return and few growth prospects in the de-

veloped world were high-return, high-growth opportunities in China. These businessmen were skilled at replication and at knowing the exact time when mainland-Chinese conditions were ripe for any particular activity.

Vancouver held no replication opportunities. All the normal First World activities already existed there. To get rich in Vancouver one needed breakthrough technologies or new sociological concepts. The businessmen had neither. For them Vancouver truly was an economic desert.

RULE #4

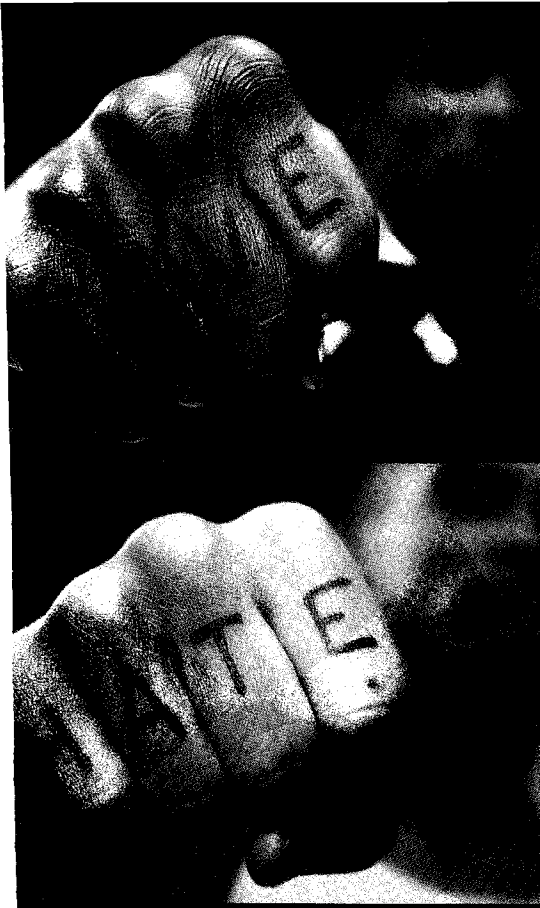
Making capitalism work in a deflationary environment is much harder than making it work in an inflationary environment.

SYSTEMATIC deflation is not a certainty, but the third industrial revolution has made it likely enough that there's good reason to think about how standard economic operating procedures change when prices start to fall.

Globalization is forcing prices down. Production is being moved from high-cost to low-cost locations, and prices are falling as a result. Name any major product, calculate how much the world could produce if every factory were operating at capacity, subtract what the world is going to buy, and you'll find that the world's production potential exceeds expected consumption by *at least* a third. Cars, semiconductor chips, and oil are but three of many examples. With such an excess of production capacity, falling prices are no mystery. Firms have an enormous incentive to lower prices in an attempt to keep their facilities operating closer to capacity.

Globalization also brings pressure to bear to change work practices, to raise productivity, and to lower wages. BMW used its ability to set up a manufacturing plant in the United States as leverage with its unions to change work practices in Germany. Flexible shifts were introduced in Germany so that when demand was high, the plants could operate on weekends. This allowed capital costs to be cut by a quarter. BMW workers essentially have bank accounts in which their hours of work on weekends or after a normal shift can be deposited. When demand is low, workers who aren't needed can draw pay for the hours of work accumulated in their bank accounts. Overtime is not paid unless it is clear that total hours of work in a year will exceed the standard. The company is now spreading these practices to its Rover plants, in Britain. The British workers have been told that they must cut the productivity gap, of 30 percent, between themselves and the Germans. BMW does not have to threaten that if they don't, production will be moved elsewhere. Everyone knows that. With labor costs and wages down (the same pressures have been forcing down real weekly U.S. wages for the bottom two thirds of the work force at the rate of about a per-

Why is it a hate crime when whites commit violence against blacks but not vice versa?



In our politically correct culture, it is simply improper to notice that black people, like whites, can be responsible for vicious crimes of hate. That's why the self-righteous left will be in for some surprises should the law they're proposing go into effect. Sorting Americans into specially protected racial and gender groups like a human "endangered species" act, and designating whites and heterosexuals as "oppressors," is itself an instigation to commit

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makes you think

centage point a year for the past twenty-five years), prices must eventually start to fall.

The Asian meltdown substantially increases the downward pressures on prices. Indonesia and Thailand have to export more, and can do so only by lowering prices. If their global competitors, mostly in the Third World, do not want to lose market share, they have no choice but to match the lower prices. In the developed world similar pressure comes from Korea and Japan.

New technologies, especially those affecting energy, minerals, and agricultural products, are also driving prices down very rapidly. Oil prices were at an all-time low early this year. Gold, that bellwether commodity, is also down dramatically from where it was just a few years ago. In every case new processes are dramatically cutting the costs of extracting value from nature.

Downsizing and outsourcing have also played a role in reducing prices. It is common in America for companies to have contracts with their suppliers that require annual price reductions. Auto-parts manufacturers, for example, have signed contracts with the major auto producers calling for price reductions of three percent a year. Outsourcing is largely responsible for these tough contracts, because it is easier to get tough with an outside supplier than it is with an inside supplier. If an outside supplier makes no money with the lower prices, that is his problem. But if an inside supplier makes no money, the corporation loses in one of its selling divisions what it gains in one of its buying divisions. It sees no gain in aggregate profits.

Such practices led to a fall in new-car prices in the United States last year for the first time since the early 1970s.

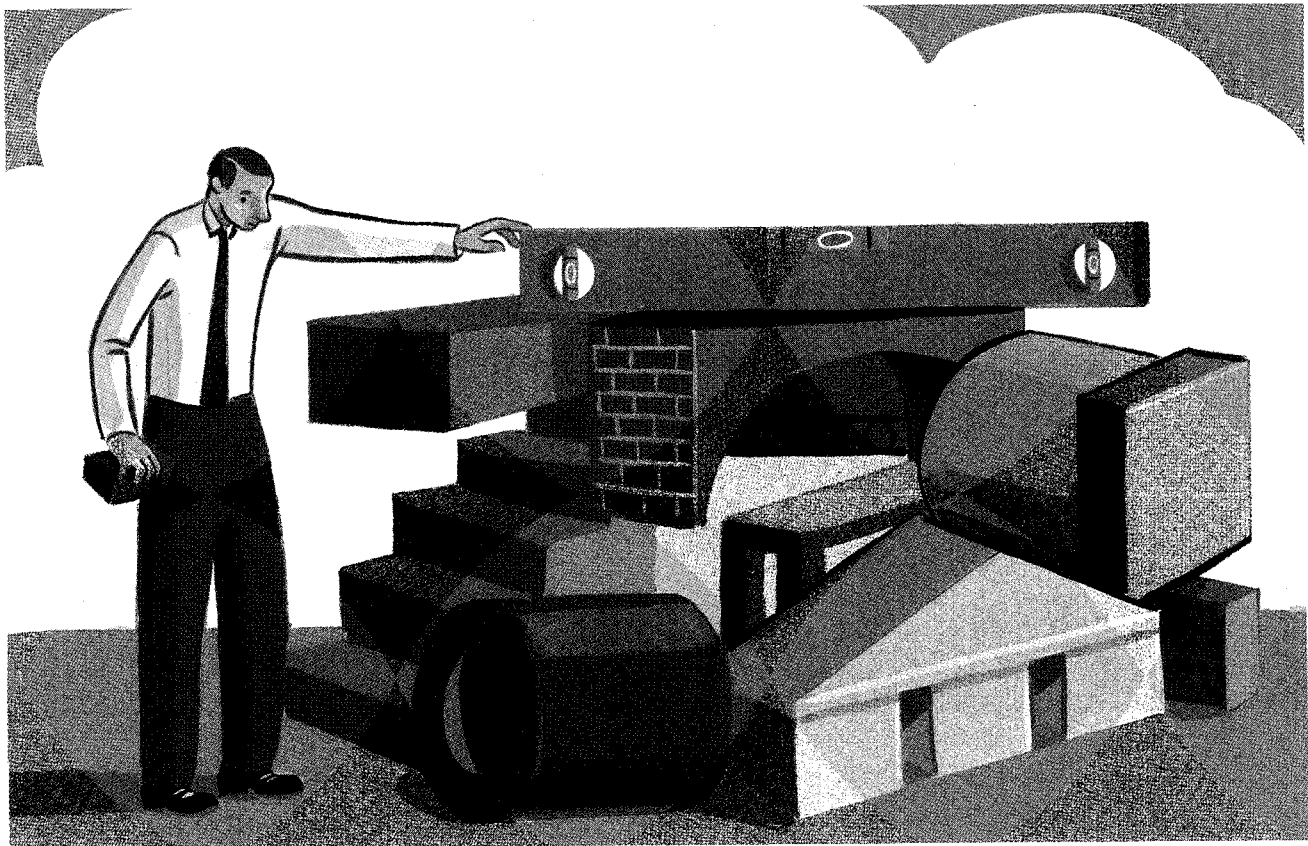
In a deflationary world debt is to be avoided at all costs. Real interest rates (nominal money rates plus the rate of deflation) are very high and debts have to be repaid in dollars of greater value than the dollars that were borrowed. Those with debts want to repay them as quickly as possible, because debt burdens automatically grow larger in real terms over time. If prices fall by 10 percent, a \$100 debt effectively becomes a \$110 debt. And if debt reduction becomes the No. 1 priority, no one will invest in the things that cause growth.

RULE #5

**There are no institutional
substitutes for individual entrepreneurial
change agents.**

CAPITALISM is a process of creative destruction. The new destroys the old. Both the creation and the destruction are essential to driving the economy forward. Entrepreneurs are central to the process of creative destruction; they bring the new technologies and the new concepts into active commercial use. They are the change agents of capitalism.

The old patterns of powerful vested interests must be broken if the new is to exist, but those vested interests fight back. They are not willing to fade quietly into the pages of history. Entrepreneurs built the national companies that de-



stroyed local companies at the end of the nineteenth century, and they are building the global companies that are destroying national companies at the end of the twentieth century.

History teaches us that it is only too easy to stamp out entrepreneurship. It is a fundamental human characteristic but, despite its creative and destructive powers, an extremely fragile one. Among most peoples in most times and most places entrepreneurs do not exist. The economic possibilities exist, but they are not seen, the energy to realize them is lacking, or the risks they involve seem too great.

When societies aren't organized so that the old vested interests can be brushed aside, entrepreneurs cannot emerge. Social systems have to be built in which entrepreneurs have the freedom to destroy the old. Yet destroying the old can too easily be seen as a step into chaos. Societies that aren't ready to break with the past aren't willing to let entrepreneurs come into existence.

Europe provides a good example of the importance of entrepreneurship. Europe saves and invests more than the United States, has a better-educated populace, and has a basic understanding of science that is just as good as that in the United States, yet it has created none of the new brainpower industries of the twenty-first century. Last year the production arm of the last indigenous European computer manufacturer, Siemens Nixdorf, was sold to Acer, of Taiwan. How can a region be a leader in the twenty-first century and be completely out of the computer business? The European entrepreneurs that should exist don't.

Sociology almost always dominates technology. Ideas often lie unused because people do not want to use them. The fact that something is possible does not mean that it will happen. Great persistence is needed to bring a truly new idea into the market. Steam toys have been unearthed in the archaeological exploration of ancient Greece, and the ancient Egyptians had steam-powered temple doors—yet the steam engine did not emerge as a source of power for economic production until the eighteenth century. The right sociology had to be in place for revolutionary new products to emerge.

RULE #6

No society that values order above all else will be creative; but without some degree of order creativity disappears.

CONSIDER China at the outset of the fifteenth century. Its curiosity, its instinct for exploration, and its drive to build had created all the technologies necessary to launch the Industrial Revolution—something that would not actually occur for another 400 years. It had the blast furnace and piston bellows for making steel (the amount of pig iron that China produced annually in the late eleventh century would not be matched anywhere in the world for 700 years); gun-

powder and the cannon for military conquest; the compass and the rudder for exploration; paper and movable type for printing; the iron plough, the horse collar, rotary threshing machines, and mechanical seeders to generate agricultural surpluses; the ability to drill for natural gas; and in mathematics the decimal system, negative numbers, and the concept of zero, which put the Chinese far ahead of the Europeans. Large Chinese armadas—carrying as many as 28,000 men—were exploring Africa's east coast at about the same time that Portugal and Spain were sending much smaller expeditions down the west coast of Africa. Seven major Chinese expeditions explored the Indian Ocean with ships four times as large as those of Columbus.

But the geographic conquests and the industrial revolution that were possible did not happen. The Chinese rejected and ultimately forgot the technologies that could have given them world dominance. New technologies were perceived as threats rather than opportunities. Innovation was forbidden. Imperial edicts prohibited the building of new oceangoing ships and sailing away from the Chinese coastline. By the end of the fifteenth century the demand for order had overridden intrinsic human curiosity, the desire to explore, and the drive to build.

Consider the opposite case of Russia in the seventy-five years before the Russian Revolution. Creativity flourished in the chaos of a dying empire. Think of all the great authors: Tolstoy, Dostoevski, Chekhov, Turgenev, Gogol—the list goes on and on. Likewise in the world of music and the arts. Stravinsky, Tchaikovsky, Kandinsky, Kasimir, and many others are still played in our concert halls or admired in our museums. In science Russia was a leader. Wilhelm Ostwald was one of the first Nobel Prize winners in chemistry, for his work on the speed of chemical reactions. Ivan Pavlov, also a Nobel Prize winner, is perhaps the most famous physiologist ever. Dmitri Mendeleev devised the periodic table of chemical elements. Markov chains—named for the mathematician Andrei Markov—have found a wide variety of applications in physics, biology, linguistics, and economics. Nikolai Lobachevski developed non-Euclidean geometry. Being skeptical and refusing to accept authority are the secrets of scientific advancement. Living in chaos, Russians could be skeptical. Compared with the dangers of political revolt against the Czar, the risks of scientific revolt against perceived wisdom were small.

Creativity flourished in the chaos, yes, but without some degree of order it was impossible for the Russians to use that creativity to develop a successful economy. Chaos led to more chaos, and ultimately to the Russian Revolution. Order was reimposed. Creativity died.

To advance and use knowledge a society needs the right combination of chaos and order. Too much order (China) does not work. Too much chaos (Russia) does not work. Although not as extreme, America and Japan are in many ways similar to Russia and China. America has more than enough chaos to be creative, but too little order to use its ideas in the most efficient

ways. Japan has more than enough order to be efficient but too little chaos to be creative. Both could gain if each moved a little in the direction of the other. Successful societies create and manage a tension between order and chaos without letting either of them get out of hand. New ideas are easily frustrated if societies are not receptive to the chaos that comes from change, yet societies have to maintain an appropriate degree of order to take advantage of creative breakthroughs.

At the individual level these same forces show up as a tension between tradition and rebellion. Einstein dropped out of high school at the age of fifteen; renounced his citizenship a year later; lived on the margins socially, economically, and morally; and called himself a gypsy and was viewed as a bohemian. His life was in some sense a search for order in disorder, both scientifically and socially. Great creativity requires hard facts, wild imagination, and nonlogical jumps forward that are then proved to be right by working backward to known principles. Only the rebellious can do it.

Entrepreneurial and organizational skills, curiosity, the desire to explore, and the drive to build can be enhanced. Useful curiosity is a characteristic of individuals who have mastered the existing body of knowledge but are not paralyzed by it.

RULE #7

A successful knowledge-based economy requires large public investments in education, infrastructure, and research and development.

IT is not just a matter of brilliant individuals and aggressive entrepreneurs. The new economic game is simultaneously a team game and an individual sport. Without the support of the team the individual fails. Without individual initiative the team fails. Both are necessary.

Some countries are willing to invest in research and development; others are not. The right amount to invest is not obvious. The industrial world's four biggest economies spend very similar percentages of GDP on R&D: France and Germany spend 2.3 percent, Japan 2.8 percent, and the United States 2.5 percent. But the similarity derives more from a desire in each not to let the other three get ahead than from any proof that they are spending the right amount.

Most private American R&D, about four fifths, is done by big firms. Even among these big spenders, however, spending levels vary greatly: Boeing spends four percent of sales, Intel nine percent, Lucent 12 percent, and Microsoft 17 percent. Expenditure levels depend on the industry under consideration and on whether firms in that industry believe that the basic science is in place to make real progress in developing new goods or services. Virtually 100 percent of Intel's sales and profits come from products developed within the past three years, but only about 30 to 40 percent

of IBM's profits come from recently developed products.

For countries or companies technological leadership is not the same thing as R&D spending. Europe spends its share on research, but if one looks at technological leadership, that spending does not seem to be paying off. To pay off, obviously, research has to be followed by the activities necessary to embed the newly developed technologies in the economy. Where America outclasses Europe is not so much in R&D spending on information technology, for example, as in investments in information hardware and software. As a fraction of GDP, U.S. investments were twice those of Germany or France in 1996. What has been learned isn't very different, but what is being done with the learning is quite different.

Private rates of return on R&D spending (the financial benefits that accrue to the firm doing the spending) average about 24 percent. But social rates of return on R&D spending (the economic benefits that accrue to the entire society) are about 66 percent (as computed by averaging eight different studies), with a range from 50 to 105 percent—almost three times as high as private rates. Two out of three dollars in net benefits generated do not accrue to those paying for the R&D. This result, never contradicted in the economic literature, provides powerful evidence that there are huge positive social spillovers from research and development. Left to themselves, private firms will spend too little, because they cannot capture all the benefits that flow from their activities.

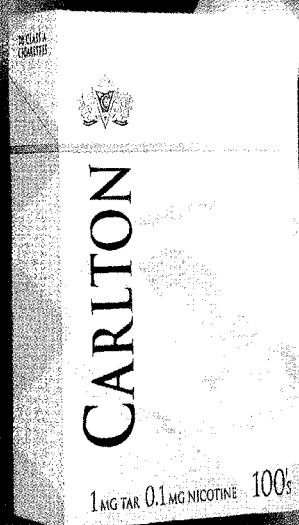
Because the government doesn't care exactly which Americans reap the benefits, it has a very important role to play in R&D. Rates of return on R&D spending are far above those found elsewhere in the economy. Government now pays for about 30 percent of total R&D, but with a 66 percent rate of return it should be spending much more. Americans as a whole are investing too little in R&D. Put simply, the payoff from social investment in basic research is as clear as anything is ever going to be in economics.

Private returns are apt to be much more certain if one is looking for an extension of existing knowledge rather than for a major breakthrough; thus private firms tend to concentrate their money on the developmental end of the R&D process. Time lags are also shorter, and in the business world speed is everything.

Because of this proclivity in the private sector, government should focus its spending on long-tailed projects for advancing basic knowledge. This is where private firms won't invest, but it is also precisely where the breakthroughs that generate private business opportunities are made. That is why biotechnology had to be supported by the government. Where it did not receive government support—everywhere except the United States—it did not develop. No private company would have made the investments that the National Institutes of Health did, even if the company had known that success was certain, because money went in for more than twenty-five years before any salable products came out.

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The biggest unknown for the individual in a knowledge-based economy is how to have a career in a system where there are no careers.

E DUCATION has always been a high-risk investment for the individual. More than 20 percent of all college graduates will end up making less than the average high school graduate. They invested and it did not pay off. But recently it has become even riskier. How does one plan the investments necessary to have a career in the face of corporate downsizings at profitable firms?

For my generation of high school graduates the concept of a career had meaning. During the 1950s in Montana, where I went to high school, many high school graduates started as laborers in the copper mines. Starting wages were good, and one could count on annual raises of two or three percent. There was a skill ladder. Laborers moved up to operating underground trains or other kinds of heavy equipment, learning the necessary skills by working as assistants to the operators. Someone who demonstrated intelligence and judgment could be given responsibility for setting off underground explosions. Each promotion meant higher hourly wages. When a worker reached his mid-thirties, he could expect to take the last step on the earnings ladder and become a contract miner, who was paid for each foot of tunnel dug rather than by the hour. He was no longer a wage slave. On this career ladder high school graduates could match college graduates in earnings.

But that's all gone now. Those mines were shut down. The thousands of people who worked there were laid off.

What used to be true only in declining industries—that skills suddenly become valueless—is now true everywhere. Downsizing is a way of life even in good times. In a global economy, if skills are cheaper somewhere else in the world, companies will move there to lower production costs. They aren't tied to any particular set of workers. When new knowledge makes old skills obsolete, firms want to employ workers who already have that knowledge. They don't want to pay for retraining. In the second half of this decade profitable American companies have laid off more than half a million workers each year despite the economic boom. The old career ladders are gone. The old lifetime employees are gone.

Explicitly or implicitly, today's high school graduate is given a message: "You are unlikely to have a lifetime career in any one company. You are going to have to learn to take responsibility for and manage your own career. Regular annual wage increases are a thing of the past. Paternalism is gone." If they are honest, employers themselves deliver the message. But how does anyone follow this advice?

If career ladders don't exist within any one company, maybe they exist across different companies. This would

mean that a good initial performance at Company A would lead to training opportunities, a better job, and higher wages at Company B. But the world doesn't work that way for most employees. Companies don't tell other companies who their good employees are—even if they have no promotion opportunities to offer those employees. They don't want to lose them. And even if they did tell other companies, they wouldn't be believed. They would be suspected of trying to get rid of their bad workers. Similarly, they don't tell other companies about their bad employees. They don't want to open themselves up to lawsuits. If asked, and they seldom are, companies are willing to tell other companies just one thing about a worker seeking a new job: Yes, that person did work for us.

In this context a good performance at Company A doesn't matter, because it does not lead to opportunities for training and promotion at Company B. When workers move from one company to another, they simply start over at another entry-level job; there is no progress up a career ladder. The rational strategy is to keep moving until one finds a company that still has internal career ladders. But as such companies become fewer, the number of high school graduates with real career opportunities ahead of them declines to the vanishing point.

A cross-company career ladder runs into other problems. After age forty-five cross-company career moves are difficult, and after age fifty-five they are impossible. (Those tracking downsized workers find that after age fifty-five they seldom find good jobs with good companies.) Age-discrimination laws can protect older employees against being unfairly dismissed from their old firms, but they cannot get them a good job at a new company. Employers have the right to hire the best workers available. In a fast-changing world older employees too often bring obsolete experience and out-of-date skills. There are always a lot of young potential employees who look more promising.

The lack of career opportunities is dramatically visible in earnings data. The gains in real annual earnings of high school graduates aged twenty to forty are much smaller than they used to be. There are lots of jobs, and unemployment is low, but opportunities to acquire skills and the higher wages that go with them don't exist. As a result, earnings profiles are flatter. The lack of on-the-job opportunities to acquire new skills is another reason that the wage gap between high school graduates and college graduates has gotten much bigger in recent years.

Real wages have also been falling for most of the male labor force. Graduating from American high schools, these men don't initially have the same level of skills as their counterparts in the rest of the industrialized world, nor do they get the post-secondary skills training (apprenticeships, for example) that most of the rest of the world gives its non-college-bound labor force. At the same time, wage gains for those in the top 20 percent of the work force have never been larger. The widening disparity in earnings and wealth does-

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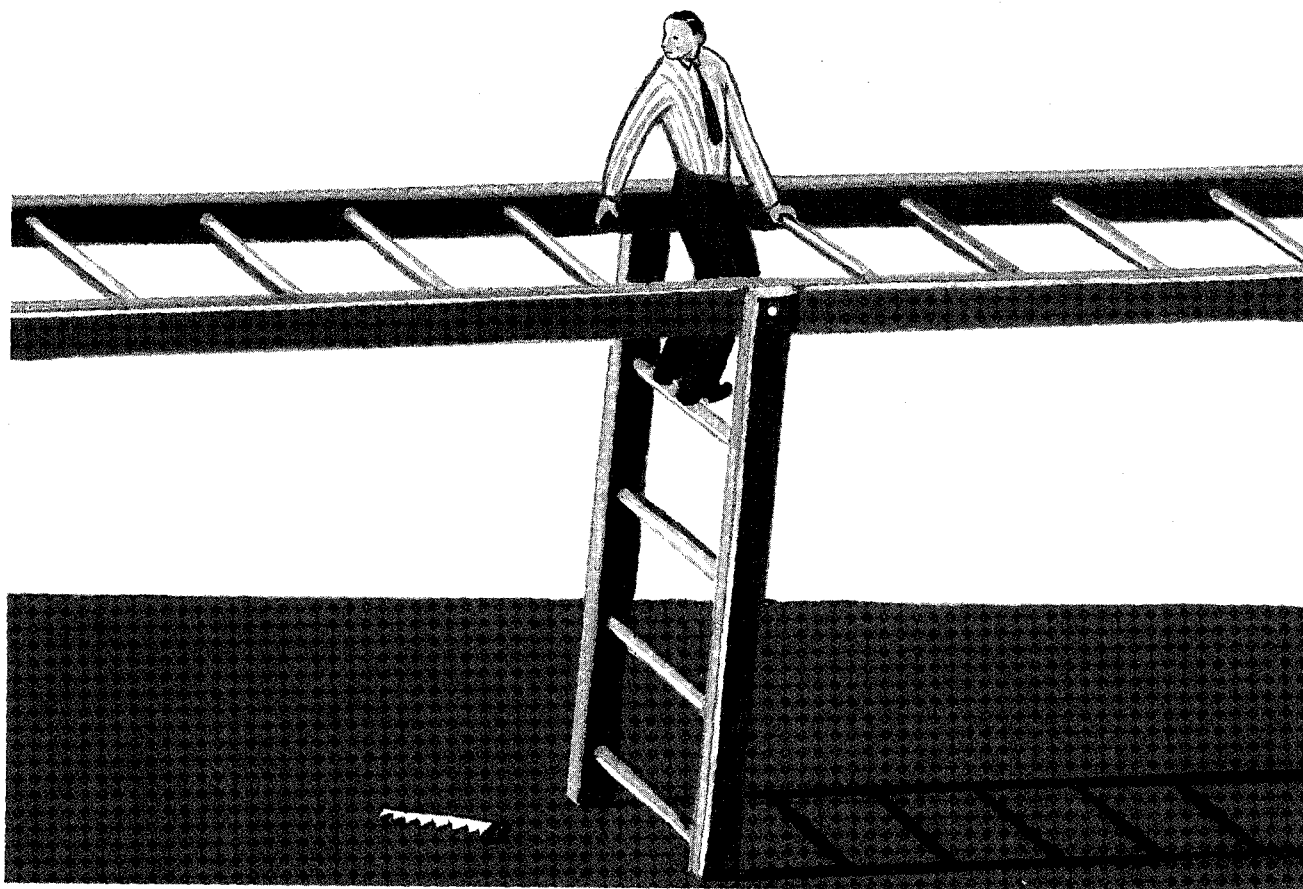


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n't create problems for the economy (it simply produces more luxury goods and fewer middle-class goods), but it probably does create long-run political problems in a democracy. How does one preach political equality in an economy of ever-growing inequality?

The issue is not jobs. It is high wages and careers. If wages fall to be commensurate with skills, jobs are always available. That is what the American experience proves. Jobs have never been more plentiful than they are in the 1990s, yet wages have been falling for more than half of the work force. In contrast with jobs, careers are in very short supply in America.

With career ladders in place, the ambitious worker of the 1950s or the 1960s could figure out what skills were needed for advancement. He or she knew what to take in night school. But without career ladders, how does anyone rationally plan an educational investment? What skills will pay off? No one wants to waste investment funds on skills that will go unused.

Historically, on-the-job training has been central to skills acquisition for much of the population. But with downsizing, the days of extensive on-the-job training have ended. What replaces it? In economics textbooks workers start to pay employers for the training they used to get free, when they were expected to be lifetime employees, by working for wages below what they could get from an employer who was not providing training. This has not happened. Judging what skills to buy from one's employer is no simpler than judging what skills to buy from an outside institution.

Also missing from a downsizing environment is a sense

of economic security. If workers are asked what factors are most important in a job, economic security always comes out ahead of maximum wages. This is not the answer that is supposed to be given by *Homo economicus*. He or she is supposed to be interested in lifetime income maximization, and not to be worried about the risks and uncertainties of economic life. But real live human beings like the feeling of a solid economic floor under them. *Homo economicus* does not worry about starving between jobs.

Paradoxically, just when one would think that firms would be building closer relationships with their key knowledge workers, in order to keep them committed to the firm, they are smashing the implicit social contract with these workers. Knowledge workers, like other workers, are now fired when not needed or when their skills become obsolete. They, too, see a reduction in their real wages when cheaper alternatives are found elsewhere in the world. Firms invest less in on-the-job training for knowledge workers even when they want them to stay around, because they know that in the future fewer of them will stay around. If workers are laid off when not needed, the smart ones know that they should leave whenever an even marginally better job opportunity presents itself.

As job uncertainty rises, the numbers of those with a strong interest in the success of their current employers dwindle. Surveys show that although attachment to their occupations has remained constant for American workers over the past two decades, the number of those with a strong attachment to their employers has gone down by a fifth. The system is

evolving toward less commitment and less investment in skills just as it should be moving in the opposite direction.

The basic problem in the United States is that every employer wants a free ride in the training system. "You train, I'll hire" is the American way. Whenever unemployment is low, employers who themselves do no training bitterly complain about the shortage of trained workers. They see nothing strange about their complaints. As for the employees, without career ladders they cannot intelligently acquire the right skills on their own. Since they will be switching employers frequently, they don't know what skills they will need or how long those skills will be relevant to their earning opportunities. As a result—rationally—they don't invest in skills.

When it is clear that something must be done but rational individuals and companies won't do it, society has to reorganize itself to make what is individually irrational into something that is individually rational. There is a simple solution. For example, France levies a training tax of 1.5 percent of payroll. The purpose is not to collect taxes but to make it rational for every employer to train. Employers can deduct their expenditures for training from that 1.5 percent tax. Thus if they spend 1.5 percent of their sales on training their work force, they pay no tax. Since the money will be taken away from them if they don't train, training becomes a free good as far as the firm is concerned. No one tells employers what skills to teach their workers, but they are effectively being told that they must teach some skills. Such a system aids everyone. It makes employers invest as if there were career ladders even when these have been abolished. If all employers have to invest, no one gets a free ride.

MAJOR UNRESOLVED PROBLEMS

THE biggest problem of the third industrial revolution is as easy to enunciate as it is difficult to solve. Technology is creating a global economy that is rapidly supplanting our old national economies. National governments cannot control this new economy, yet no one, least of all Americans, wants to create the forms of global government that might be able to control it. As a result we are going to be living in a fundamentally unmanaged economic system. The difficulties of containing the 1997 Asian economic meltdown are just the first of many such difficulties we can expect.

National governments, which used to worry about managing and maintaining their economic systems, are slowly being pushed out of business. Changes in global finance overwhelm all but the largest governments. Governments have lost much of their influence over the movement of information and capital. They cannot control who crosses their borders either physically or culturally. They still have their armies, but they are afraid to use them when wars are also fought on television.

Conversely, the power—or perhaps we should say the free-

dom from government supervision—of global businesses is growing with companies' ability to move to the most advantageous locations and to play countries off against one another in bidding for attractive investment projects.

As national governments shrink and global corporations expand, a second major problem emerges. Almost everywhere we look we see rising economic inequalities among countries, among firms, among individuals. Returns to capital are up; returns to labor are down. Returns to skills are up; returns to unskilled labor are down. Firms will be global players or they will be niche players. The mid-sized national firm is a species in danger of extinction. Traditionally, national governments have acted to keep such inequalities under control. But having lost their ability to manage the system, they have also lost their ability to restrain economic inequalities. For at least a while we are simply going to live in a world with greater inequalities on a broad scale.

THE third industrial revolution is making obsolete old institutions and old modes of operation, requiring the individual, the firm, and the nation to change.

For individuals here are three words of advice: skills, skills, skills. The economic prospects of those without skills are bleak. What we now see—falling real wages for those without skills—is going to continue. In education the needs of the bottom two thirds of the labor force are particularly acute. In an age when brawn earns little and brains much, this part of the labor force simply has to be much better educated. Something is fundamentally wrong when the bottom quarter of South Korean eighth-grade students score, on average, higher than their American counterparts.

Entrepreneurial opportunities were few in the 1950s and 1960s. Today they are many. But for every success we read about in the paper, every new billionaire made, dozens of entrepreneurs will go broke unnoticed and unmourned. The downside risks are real.

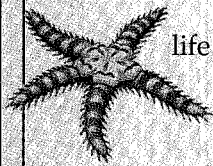
Cannibalization is the challenge for old business firms. Can they aggressively seize the opportunities opened up by the third industrial revolution, even when that means deliberately destroying existing profitable activities? History is clear: few can, and those that don't are likely to die. For new firms the economic opportunities have never been better. The world is full of openings for businesses to grow in environments without established competitors.

Nations that are heavy investors in education, infrastructure, and R&D are going to tend to win. We need a national capital investment budget to remind ourselves of how we are spending our resources. The negative savings rates that we now have are not the route to success.

For those with skills and a fondness for risks, however, who are willing to cannibalize their old activities and are living in high-investment societies, the times have never been more favorable. ☛

The Sanctuary That Was Saved.

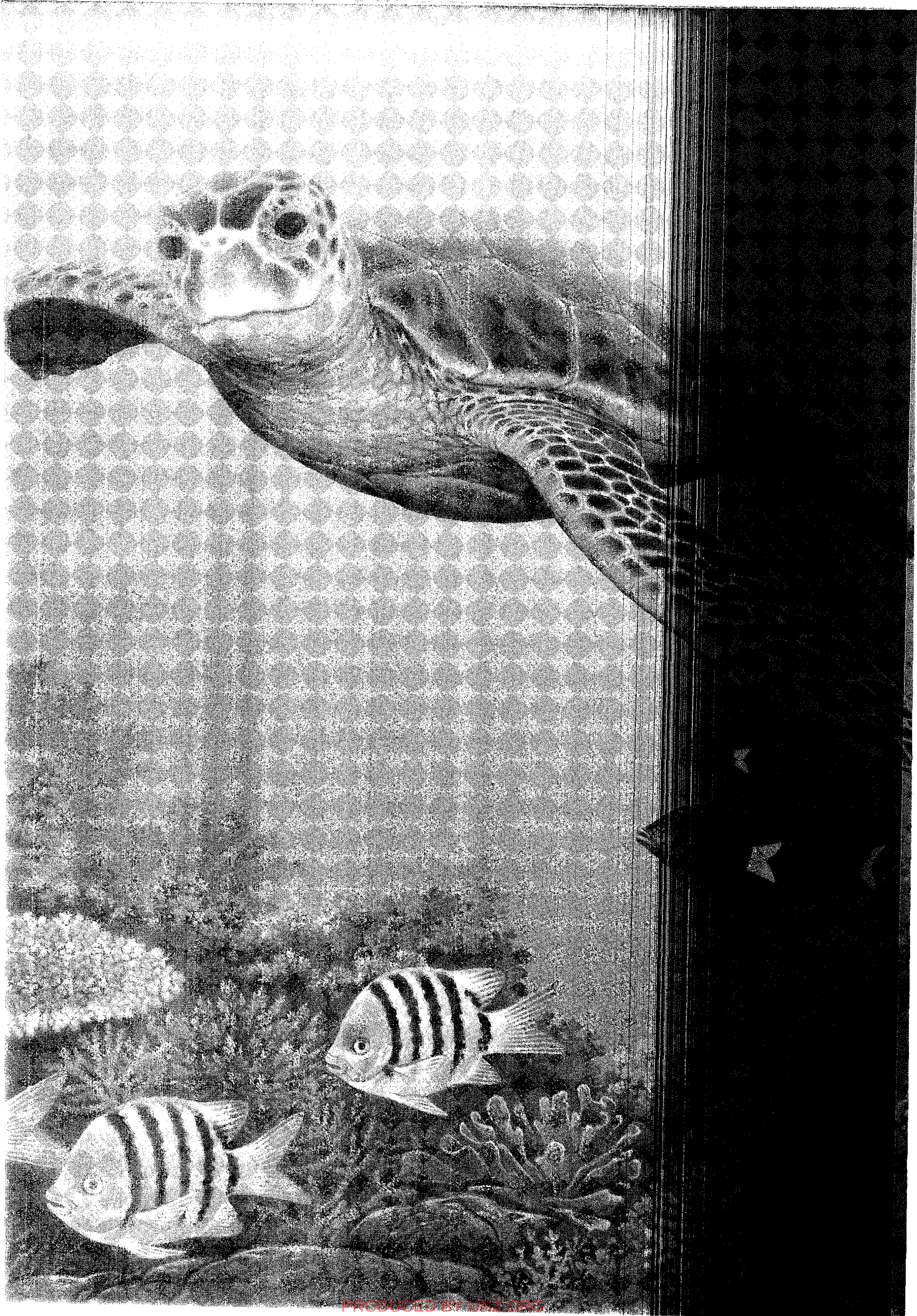
Over 140 feet down, the ocean floor in the Gulf of Mexico looks like a desert. Offering marine life few places with ample shelter and food. But sanctuary comes from a surprising source: oil platforms. Over time, they become thriving habitats for entire populations of sea creatures. So when certain platforms are retired, people carefully clean, then place them. Maintaining an extraordinary oasis, and an ideal place for nature to call home.



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KISSINGER, METTERNICH, AND REALISM

by ROBERT D. KAPLAN

*Henry Kissinger's first book, on the Napoleonic Wars, explains
Kissinger's foreign policy better than any of his memoirs, and is striking as
an early display of brilliance and authority*

TIME changes reputations. The current favorable reconsideration of Henry Kissinger may have less to do with the recent publication of his final volume of memoirs than with the lackluster quality of his successors at the State Department. Cyrus Vance, Edmund Muskie, Alexander Haig, Lawrence Eagleburger, and Warren Christopher are footnotes to history. George Shultz and James Baker were more substantial presences, but their substance had much more to do with their common sense than with their intellectual creativity (of which Shultz had some and Baker less). Then there is Madeleine Albright, who was hailed at first as having the perfect combination of gutsiness, idealism, and policy savvy, but who is turning out to be ineffectual. In fact, as Albright's star has waned, Kissinger's has risen.

Two years ago, still optimistic about Secretary of State Albright, one journalist wrote in *The Economist*, "Unlike Henry Kissinger (a refugee whose thinking owes more to the Napoleonic wars than to the 20th century), Mrs. Albright has a geopolitical view still shaped by that searing time" of the West's appeasement of Hitler at Munich. Nonsense. If there is any diplomat whose ideas were shaped early, immutably, and meticulously by the experience of Nazism and Munich, it is Kissinger. The problem is that many intellectuals are uncomfortable with what Kissinger seems to have learned as a Jewish teenager in Hitler's Germany. For a long time they believed that he learned little.

Kissinger's first book, *A World Restored: Metternich, Castlereagh and the Problems of Peace 1812–1822* (1957), covers not the Nazi era but the latter part of the Napoleonic Wars and the efforts of European statesmen to build a durable peace afterward. The book's principal character, the Aus-

trian diplomat Prince Clemens von Metternich—secretive, manipulative, and tragic in his world view—is often seen as the figure Kissinger took as a model, though Kissinger has denied it. Nevertheless, Munich and the Holocaust are ever-present in *A World Restored*. Kissinger, who fled Nazi Germany in 1938, was in the early 1950s trying to claw his way into the stuffy, Protestant-dominated sanctums of the East Coast foreign-policy establishment. He was not about to wear his trauma and his Jewishness on his sleeve, as it is fashionable to do now. Rather, he elegantly camouflaged them. In *A World Restored*, Napoleon plays the Hitlerite role, and Kissinger's answer to the problem of mass evil is contrary to the instincts of liberal humanists. His argument is thus subtle, original, and, I believe, brave.

KISSINGER first achieved fame as a political scientist with the publication of *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy* (1957), in which he opposed Secretary of State John Foster Dulles's policy of massive nuclear retaliation against a Soviet attack, arguing instead for a flexible response of conventional forces and smaller, tactical nuclear weapons. *A World Restored*—Kissinger's doctoral thesis, which he completed in 1954—is evidence of how the Holocaust, along with the larger record of modern European history, made Kissinger a "realist." The meaning of the term is less clear than it seems.

The very subject of Kissinger's doctoral thesis raised eyebrows at Harvard, as one biographer, Walter Isaacson, has observed. At a time when the threat of thermonuclear extinction obsessed political scientists, the court diplomacy of early-nineteenth-century Europe seemed quaint and irrelevant.

*P*olicy is not made in an emotional vacuum by
"objective" people. The religious and social back-
grounds of officials are inseparable from their opinions.

Even if the technology of war had changed, Kissinger implied, the task of statesmen remained the same: to construct a balance of fear among great powers as part of the maintenance of an orderly international system—a system that, while not necessarily just or fair, was accepted by the principal players as legitimate. As long as the system was maintained, no one would challenge it through revolution—the way Hitler in the 1930s, categorized by the thirty-year-old Kissinger as a “revolutionary chieftain,” did.

It seemed to Kissinger that a world threatened by nuclear disaster could learn much from Metternich. With the British Foreign Secretary, Viscount Robert Stewart Castlereagh, Metternich built an order so ingenious that from 1815, the year of Napoleon’s defeat at Waterloo, to the outbreak of the First World War, a hundred years later, Europe knew no major conflicts, with the exception of the ten-month-long Franco-Prussian War, in 1870–1871. Thanks in significant measure to Metternich, who did everything in his power to forestall the advent of democracy and freedom in the Hapsburg and Ottoman Empires, Europe in 1914 saw peace and steady economic growth as natural and permanent conditions. Europe had thus lost that vital, tragic sensibility without which disaster is hard to avoid, and troops rushed onto the battlefields of Flanders in a fit of romanticism.

When Kissinger wrote, nuclear weapons had altered statesmanship less than we thought—just as new threats such as disease, terrorism, and the breakdown of unstable governments change world politics less than we think. The challenge for diplomats will always be how to maintain a semblance of order through a balance of fear, cooperation, and defensive mechanisms, whether diplomatic, military, or, as in the case of disease, scientific. In an age when borders are weakening and a messier, more cosmopolitan (that is, medieval) world is re-emerging, the story of how Metternich, born in the Rhineland and more comfortable in French than in German, sought security for a still-feudal Austrian-administered polyglot empire through alliances based on philosophical values rather than ethnic identification is a relevant medicinal.

IN the first pages of *A World Restored*, Kissinger confronted abstractly the 1938 debacle at Munich, in which the British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, a progressive reformer who sought peace in order to concentrate on Britain’s domestic problems, allowed Hitler to occupy the Bohemian borderlands of Czechoslovakia.

Those ages which in retrospect seem most peaceful were least in search of peace. . . . Whenever peace—conceived as the avoidance of war—has been the primary objective of a power or a group of powers, the international system has been at the mercy of the most ruthless member of the international community.

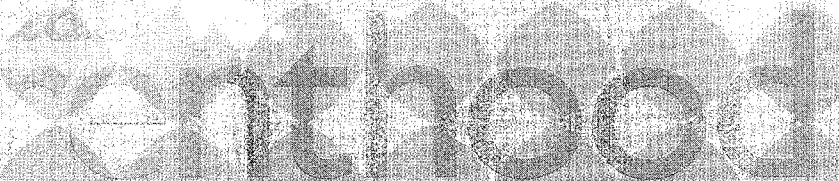
Kissinger declared, “It is a mistake to assume that diplomacy can always settle international disputes if there is ‘good faith’ and ‘willingness to come to an agreement’”; in a revolutionary situation “each power will seem to its opponent to lack precisely these qualities.” In such circumstances many will see the early demands of a revolutionary power as “merely tactical” and will delude themselves that the revolutionary power would actually accept the status quo with a few modifications. Meanwhile, “Those who warn against the danger in time are considered alarmists.”

“‘Appeasement,’” Kissinger concluded, “is the result of an inability to come to grips with a policy of unlimited objectives.” A few pages later, for good measure, he added,

Coalitions against revolutions have usually come about only at the end of a long series of betrayals . . . for the powers which represent legitimacy . . . cannot “know” that their antagonist is not amenable to “reason” until he has demonstrated [that he is not]. . . . And he will not have demonstrated it until the international system is already overturned.

That, of course, is a pitch-perfect description of the late 1930s in Europe. Thus begins a book about how Metternich confronted and undermined the unlimited objectives of Napoleon. In 354 pages there are only three exceedingly brief passing references to Hitler, even as the diplomatic challenge he presented is comprehensively explored.

Kissinger has always been influenced by Munich, if not always directly or humanely. His and President Richard Nixon’s opening to China in order to undermine the Soviet Union while they sought détente with Moscow; their unwillingness to quit Vietnam without first wreaking havoc and spilling blood; their support of odious yet pro-American regimes in Greece and Chile; and their brilliantly executed face-off with Syria and the Soviet Union in 1970, at the time of the terrorist challenge to Jordan’s pro-Western regime—all flowed to a significant extent from Kissinger’s determination to avoid the slightest show of weakness, for which read “appeasement.” Kissinger regularly mixed violence and the threat of it with diplomacy, so that the diplomacy had credibility. He preserved what he saw as the legitimate order,



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in which the Soviet Union was both contained and accepted, so that revolutionary chaos was confined to the edges of the superpower battlefield, in the Third World. (In perceiving the Soviet Union as permanent, orderly, and legitimate, Kissinger shared a failure of analysis with the rest of the foreign-policy elite—notably excepting the scholar and former head of the State Department's policy-planning staff George Kennan, the Harvard historian Richard Pipes, the British scholar and journalist Bernard Levin, and the Eureka College graduate Ronald Reagan.) When, in 1990, Iraq invaded Kuwait, Kissinger argued for military force against Saddam Hussein. The legitimate order in the Gulf had been disrupted by a revolutionary chieftain; to react merely with sanctions would constitute appeasement, and Kissinger said as much.

Kissinger's response to Munich and Nazism in *A World Restored* is pellucid. The key word is "revolution," something that Kissinger's experience as a youth, augmented by scholarship, taught him to fear. Rapid social and political transformation leads to violence, whether throughout the Europe of the early 1800s, owing to Napoleon's aggression—itself a direct result of the French Revolution—or in

the Germany of the 1930s. Although the word "revolution" is applied to the America of the 1770s and sometimes to the Zionist movement, the cultural and philosophical awakenings among English settlers in America and Jewish settlers in Palestine took place over decades and were, in truth, evolutions. Iran did experience a revolution in the late 1970s, as did Cambodia in 1975, China in the late 1940s, and Russia in 1917. From his dread of revolutions Kissinger extracted the following principles, which I summarize:

- Disorder is worse than injustice. Injustice merely means the world is imperfect, but disorder implies that there is no justice for anyone, since it makes even the mundane details of daily existence (walking to school, for instance) risky. Obviously, great injustice is worse than a little disorder. In the 1980s Iraq was orderly, so much so that it was like a vast prison, while Iran was in revolutionary chaos. Yet I always felt safer in Iran than in Iraq. I suspect that in Kissinger's fear of disorder there is something deeply personal. In the 1930s he saw Nazism, often in the form of thuggery, overwhelm his seemingly secure physical surroundings. The Nazi thugs he observed were the riffraff cast up first by the civil violence resulting from Germany's defeat in the First World War, and then by the Depression. Kissinger's experience was thus different from that of the humanist Elie Wiesel. Wiesel, who grew up in a secluded Hasidic community in Romania in the 1930s and is five years younger than Kissinger, experienced the Holocaust itself: he spent 1944 and 1945 in Auschwitz and Buchenwald. By then Kissinger was already in the U.S. Army.

- The "most fundamental problem of politics . . . is not the control of wickedness but the limitation of righteousness." The Nazis, the Jacobins, the ayatollahs, and the others who have made revolutions have all been self-righteous. Kissinger suggested that nothing is more dangerous than people convinced of their moral superiority, since they deny their political opponents that very attribute. Tyranny, a form of disorder posing as order, is the result. This was one of Edward Gibbon's arguments against early Christianity. Gibbon represented the Enlightenment in full flower, just as Metternich, Kissinger reminded us, represented its dying breath before the onset of modernism, with its righteous causes. In any event, Kissinger observed wryly, punishing the wicked is "a relatively easy matter, because it is a simple expression" of public decency, and thus not a crucial task of statesmanship.

- Because the real task of statesmen is to forestall revolutions, the real heroes of history are enlightened conservatives such as Metternich and the eighteenth-century Briton Edmund Burke, who fought discrimination against Catholics and opposed the French Revolution for its immoderation. Burke hated revolutions, Kissinger explained, because they violate the average person's sense of morality and well-being; Metternich saw them as contrary to reason. "The true

TO THE ANIMAL IN THE HOLE

I've come back a few times,
seen you hurrying away
and, once, seen your eyes,
the green of night.
Hope for this, hope for that—
who is free from such nonsense?
The small changes in the dirt
at your entrance,
the disappearance of grass:
I note these in your absence.

You should just stay where you are.
You and your dark house
will grow together.
You'll reach the walls,
they'll welcome your fur.
I'll know you're in there somewhere,
foraging invisibly.
Good for you, then.
Keep home.

—ERICA FUNKHOUSER

conservative,” Kissinger wrote, “is not at home in social struggle. He will attempt to avoid unbridgeable schism, because he knows that a stable social structure thrives not on triumphs but on reconciliations.” (The Republican majority in Congress and the “religious right” are thus not true conservatives.) A true conservative is in fact a hesitant progressive: he or she seeks to slow change when society is reforming too fast and to instigate moderate change when society is not reforming at all. Burke’s writings are the epitome of this search for pacing. I imagine that Kissinger’s tolerance of the late Chinese ruler Deng Xiaoping and his successor, Jiang Zemin, can be explained by the fact that the two Chinese dictators represented enlightened conservatism within their own cultural and historical limits. Both fostered gradual but unmistakable reform that has bettered the material lives of tens of millions of people. At the same time, they averted the kind of revolutionary upheaval that might result from instituting democracy across a vast and geographically riven landscape in which less than 10 percent of the population is middle-class. The Chinese leadership is attempting to treat the dour effects of its decades-old revolution just as Metternich treated Europe after Napoleon’s—by doling out moderate doses of change.

The dangers inherent in fast social transformation are so great, Kissinger wrote, that demands for universal justice are ill informed.

Every statesman must attempt to reconcile what is considered just with what is considered possible. What is considered just depends on the domestic structure of his state; what is possible depends on its resources, geographic position and determination, and on the resources, determination and domestic structure of other states.

THE young Kissinger here allied himself with other foreign-policy realists of the time, including Kennan, Reinhold Niebuhr, and Hans Morgenthau. All of them doubted that America, however overarching its power, would ever be able to affect the internal evolution of many other societies at once: the world is too vast, and the expense and stamina required are prohibitive, at least with regard to winning public acceptance. Morgenthau wrote in *Vietnam and the United States* (1965) that because the resources of even a superpower are limited, morality alone can never be a basis for foreign policy. These men saw the missionary idealism of America’s ruling elite as naive. Kissinger believed that idealism had clearly failed throughout America’s diplomatic history—that it led to an inefficient cycle of intense hope and activity abroad followed by morose withdrawal once it became apparent that hope and activity were unlikely to remake the world. The clearest example is President Woodrow Wilson’s failed attempt to advance democracy and self-determination in the Muslim Middle East after

the First World War, and the isolationism that followed.

Kissinger identified the foundations of such idealism when he took up Castlereagh’s position on the Greek struggle for independence in 1821, which Metternich opposed. Castlereagh’s open-mindedness, Kissinger wrote, reflected not “a superior morality” but rather “the consciousness of safety conferred by an insular position.” Because Castlereagh’s England was surrounded by seas, it did not have to consider the implications of the breakup of Turkish rule in the Balkans—implications that a Continental power like Metternich’s Austria had no choice but to consider. Without America’s insular position, guarded by two oceans and reinforced by plentiful natural resources, idealism might never have taken root here. Realism is in part the ability to see the truth behind moral pretensions. Our insular position also explains our failure to see war for what it is: an extension of politics.

I suspect, however, that our much-vaunted foreign-policy idealism is mainly confined to the media and academia, and particularly to the intellectual journals of opinion. Those who sit behind the important desks at the National Security Council, the Departments of Defense and State, and the Pentagon are usually realists. (This is a broad definition, given how often realists disagree: witness Morgenthau’s and Kissinger’s differing positions over Vietnam.) Even the rare Administrations that were associated with foreign-policy idealism converted to realism sooner or later. It was President Jimmy Carter who began what would later be called the “Reagan arms buildup.” Traditional Republicans like George Shultz and Caspar Weinberger, and the bipartisan realist Frank Carlucci, became far more influential in the Reagan White House than neoconservative idealists like Elliott Abrams and Jeane Kirkpatrick. For her part, Albright has followed Kissinger’s playbook in not overemphasizing human rights in China and in tolerating dictatorships that serve our interests. Realists almost always run foreign policy; idealists, I have found, attend academic conferences and write books and articles from the sidelines.

Take Bosnia. I supported intervention in Bosnia, for strategic and moral reasons. Andrew Kohut, the former president of the Gallup Organization, who is now the director of the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, told me recently that the polls on Bosnia have, however, been firm and undeniable: at no point in the 1990s, despite all the emotional media coverage and revelations of war crimes, have more than half of the American people thought that U.S. intervention there was warranted. Interventions in Vietnam, Korea, Panama, Grenada, and Iraq were all more popular than our limited and belated one in Bosnia, in late 1995; only the intervention in Haiti, supported mainly by liberal Democrats, was less popular. A former British diplomat, Jonathan Clarke, wrote in his essay “Searching for the Soul of American Foreign Policy” (1995), for the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, that Americans “have in fact . . . a rather consistent, well-developed, and finely-calibrated feeling for what does

not make sense for their nation's foreign engagements," which in Clarke's view only the illuminati mistake for isolationism. Despite his grave German accent, his dire view of humanity, and his preoccupation with European history, Kissinger—who negotiated with rather than confronted the Soviet Union, who helped Nixon to withdraw from Vietnam 550,000 soldiers in three years under combat conditions, and who generally supported interventions that were popular while expressing skepticism about those that weren't—may have understood his adopted nation better than most people think he did. Indeed, before the March bombing campaign Kissinger implied in an article that forcing Serbia to implement the Kosovo peace agreement might precipitate what the Clinton Administration sought to avert: the destabilization of the southern Balkans. Even those of us who believe that the Administration had no choice but to use force must admit that Kissinger's analysis was shrewd.

Robert Musil, the Austrian writer, defined realism in *The Man Without Qualities*, his seminal twentieth-century novel, as a political sensibility driven by needs rather than by ideas. Kissinger's description of Metternich's diplomatic achievement in controlling Napoleon adds another layer: "It had not produced any great conceptions; nor had it used the noble dreams of an impatient [revolutionary] generation. Its skill did not lie in creativity but in proportion, in its ability to combine elements it treated as given." Realism is thus about deftly playing the hand that has been dealt you. It is not exciting or inspiring. Journalistic careers are rarely built on embracing realism, though policymaking careers often are.

Metternich, Kissinger wrote, "represented eternal principles not a system." By that Kissinger meant that Metternich was subtle enough to know that systems like autocracy and democracy are indifferent elements; their worth depends on the circumstances under which they operate. Metternich opposed the democratic revolutions in Europe in 1848 not because they were democratic but because they were provoked by ethnic nationalism. Metternich's ultimate achievement was to help postpone (until 1866) the eclipse of a semi-feudal, polyglot Austria by the fiercely modernizing, ethnically nationalist German state to the north. In defending Metternich, Kissinger was at odds with the conventional view of historians, who regard modernism and the independence struggles of 1848 as progressive. Since the end of the Cold War and the unleashing of ethnic nationalism in the former Soviet Union and the Balkans, the Hapsburg monarchy that Metternich served has appeared in a better light.

KISSINGER'S real achievement in *A World Restored* is his writing: a seamless blending of portraiture, philosophy, and international relations. Metternich, Kissinger wrote, was a Rococo figure, complex, finely carved, all surface, like an intricately cut prism. His face was delicate but without depth, his conversation brilliant but without ultimate

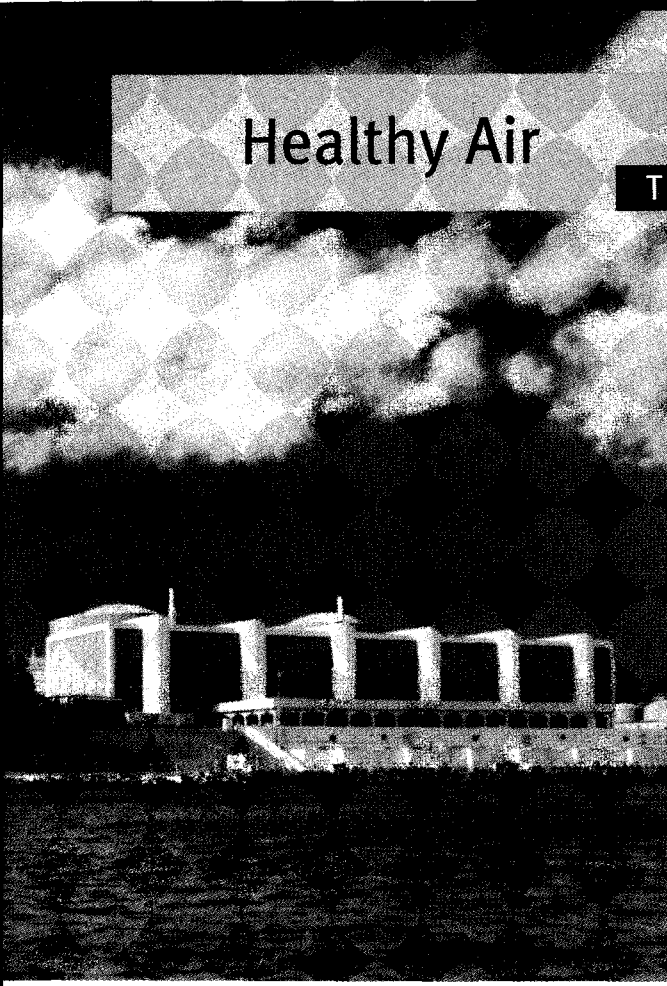
seriousness. Equally at home in the salon and in the Cabinet . . . he was the *beau-ideal* of the eighteenth-century aristocracy which justified itself not by its truth but by its existence. And if he never came to terms with the new age it was not because he failed to understand its seriousness but because he disdained it. . . . Had Metternich been born fifty years earlier, he would still have been a conservative, but there would have been no need to write pedantic disquisitions about the nature of conservatism. He would have . . . conduct[ed] his diplomacy with the circuitousness which is a symbol of certainty, of a world in which everybody understands intangibles in the same manner. He would still have played at philosophy, for this was the vogue of the eighteenth century, but he would not have considered it a tool of policy. But, in a century of seemingly permanent revolution, philosophy was the only means of rescuing universality from contingent claims.

It is such elegance, thickness of meaning, and narrative ability that puts *A World Restored* into a higher category of literature than the mere policy writings of the rest of the foreign-affairs community. By concentrating on personalities—Metternich, Castlereagh, Talleyrand—Kissinger demonstrated that policy is not made in an emotional vacuum by "objective" people. The religious and social backgrounds of officials are inseparable from their opinions. Policymaking, like lovemaking, is an intensely human activity.

The young Kissinger also realized that a determined policymaker must be in a state of constant tension with the bureaucracy. "Profound policy thrives on perpetual creation. . . . Good administration thrives on routine," he wrote. Foreign Service officers tend to support those policies that do not threaten their jobs and chances for promotion. I have found that many of them just want to get through the day. A Secretary of State who follows these instincts, rather than manipulating and coopting them, is a failed Secretary of State.

This brings me to Kissinger himself, whose personal history caused him to be obsessed with appeasement—sometimes with ironic results. His ideas for maintaining America's share of world power at a time of military debacle abroad and civic disorder at home led him to conduct policy in secret and to battle with the bureaucracy. Like many who seek power in order to do something with it rather than merely to enhance their résumés and self-esteem, he thrived on enemies. Though he has been gone from office for more than two decades, Kissinger hovers over many foreign-policy discussions to a degree that more likable and recent Secretaries of State, such as Shultz and Cyrus Vance, do not.

Both the frequency and the nature of the attacks against Kissinger avouch his centrality. Criticism of him has often been obsessive and compartmental—and devastating. There are those who despise Kissinger the wiretapper, those who despise him for betraying Cyprus, those who, like me, have faulted him for bombing Cambodia. But when it comes to Kissinger's use of *realpolitik* as a counter to America's mis-



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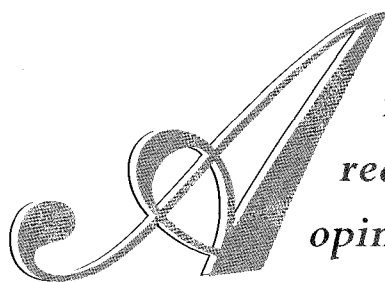
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mericans champion idealism while employing realists, perhaps because we need to have a high opinion of ourselves while pursuing our own interests.

sionary bent, serious critics have respectfully argued with him more often than denounced him.

A grimly convincing view of the human condition may be all that Kissinger ever had to offer. Despite his historical acumen, he has not always been clairvoyant: for example, he saw the Cold War as continuing indefinitely. Kissinger seems to have lacked the piercing momentary insight that George Ball displayed when he warned the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations against further involvement in Vietnam and that Kennan displayed when he suggested that if the West held fast, the Soviet Union would eventually implode. Loy Henderson, a U.S. diplomat, showed that insight time and time again: in the 1930s he was among the first to warn against Stalin; in the late 1940s he was the first to warn against the Soviet threat to the Caucasus and the Aegean; in the early 1950s he was the first to see that the Iranians would one day come to despise us and the first to see through Nehru's idealism and vanity to the anti-Americanism beneath the surface.

Kissinger's perceptiveness has been limited to the present and the past. Although he did not foresee the sudden end of communism, from his study of Castlereagh's dealings with Czar Alexander I he knew how to approach Moscow: because Russians are so sensitive to unfavorable comparisons with Europeans, try to give them the form if not the substance of what they want. Thus Kissinger wrested Egypt and Syria from the Soviet orbit while inviting Moscow to be a co-host of the late-1973 Middle East peace conference that helped to formalize the new American regional order.

VIETNAM is the crucible in which Kissinger's realism reached a pitiless extreme, and the one by which he will be judged.

My only approach toward Kissinger himself came in 1991, when I requested an interview with him for a book I was writing about Middle East specialists in the State Department. Kissinger was one of a handful of people, out of the hundreds I asked, who refused to see or even speak to me. Many people I know professionally in the journalistic and policy communities, and whom I respect, despise Kissinger. It is not easy for me to put forward this argument.

Scholars and journalists assert that Nixon and Kissinger might have ended the war in 1969, on terms similar to the ones they settled for in 1973, and prevented the deaths of 22,000 more U.S. combatants; that the two men bombed North Vietnamese cities indiscriminately with B-52s for a

negotiating advantage so slight that it was forgotten a few months afterward; and that they waged war in Cambodia illegally and with limited results, except to precipitate the Khmer Rouge takeover in 1975, however unwittingly (a point I made in my book *The Ends of the Earth*).

Kissinger's critics also note that many of these actions were taken not only for policy reasons but also for sometimes sleazy political motives. The secret invasion of Cambodia, William Shawcross asserted in his meticulously researched book *Sideshow: Kissinger, Nixon and the Destruction of Cambodia* (1979), was, among other things, the vehicle Kissinger used to help him consolidate his power within the bureaucracy.

All this I accept. But I believe that other issues should be raised. In the overwhelming majority of foreign-policy crises sordid domestic political motives and interagency infighting play a significant role. So the real questions are What were Kissinger's (and Nixon's) primary rather than secondary motives in continuing the war? and Did their actions have any result beyond the tragic loss of thousands of American and Southeast Asian lives?

Even the harshest journalistic accounts make clear that Kissinger and Nixon genuinely felt, despite the public outcry, that continuing the war was necessary for America to sustain its strategic position worldwide. Shawcross wrote that the two men were influenced by both the "Munich mentality" and the memory of how President Eisenhower ended the Korean War—by threatening the Chinese and the North Koreans. To Kissinger and Nixon, playing tough was not a surrealistic abstraction but something necessary and definable. However wrong the stance they took may appear in hindsight, Kissinger and Nixon did what they thought was right for the country's interests, knowing they would be reviled—especially among the intellectual elite, who usually have the last word in writing history.

Now, isn't that exactly how we want—or at least how we say we want—our leaders to act? Isn't what angers so many people about President Bill Clinton and other current politicians the fact that they make policy according to the results of public-opinion polls rather than to their own conviction? It may be the case that polling is unfairly criticized—that for a leader to base his or her decisions on public opinion is not so bad after all, especially if one has in mind the case of Kissinger and Nixon. It is also likely that in prolonging the war for the reasons they did, Kissinger and Nixon demonstrated more real character than do many of our present leaders.

For the Nixon Administration, Vietnam was only one aspect of a larger foreign policy—a policy that brought about significant achievements. To insist that those achievements would have taken place had the Administration withdrawn from Vietnam in 1969—and that such an early withdrawal would have gone smoothly—is rash.

To understand the context of those achievements, it is useful to consult the “U.S. History” section of *The World Almanac*. The almanac says that in April of 1969 U.S. forces in Vietnam “peaked at 543,400” and “withdrawal started July 8th,” six months into Nixon’s first term. In 1971 U.S. forces in Vietnam “were down to 140,000” and the “last U.S. combat troops left August 11,” 1972. The almanac reports some other facts. During the three years it took the Nixon Administration to withdraw combat troops—a year less than it took Charles de Gaulle to end French involvement in the Algerian war, capping his heroic reputation—“Nixon arrived in Beijing Feb. 21 [1972] for an 8-day visit to China. . . . The unprecedented visit ended with a joint communiqué pledging that both powers would work for ‘a normalization of relations.’” And “In the first visit of a U.S. president to Moscow, Nixon arrived May 22 for a week of summit talks with Kremlin leaders that culminated in a landmark strategic arms pact.” The almanac might also have noted that in September of 1970—soon after Nixon made it clear that he was withdrawing slowly, and bloodily, from Vietnam—threats by Nixon to Moscow helped to stop Syrian tanks from crossing farther into Jordan and toppling King Hussein’s pro-Western government. One could also note that in 1973 and 1974 Kissinger, serving Nixon and then Gerald Ford, manipulated the Yom Kippur War toward a stalemate that was convenient for American interests, and then brokered agreements between Israel and its Arab adversaries for a separation of forces. These deals allowed Washington to re-establish diplomatic relations with Egypt and Syria for the first time since their rupture following the Six-Day War, in 1967. The agreements also set the context for the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty of 1979 and helped stabilize relations between Israel and Syria to this day.

The point is not that Nixon and Kissinger withdrew methodically from Vietnam instead of continuing to fight the war that Johnson had escalated by using ground troops, or that elsewhere in the world they performed impressively. Rather, the point is that in the course of conducting the first large-scale American troop withdrawal in our history, under openly humiliating circumstances (more than half a million soldiers of an industrial army were running away from a Third World guerrilla force), the two men actually improved America’s geopolitical position vis-à-vis China, the Soviet Union, and the Arab world. This did not occur because of the withdrawal. A typical response I receive when I mention to the political-science community the Nixon Administration’s withdrawal from Vietnam is “What do you mean, ‘withdrawal’? They

prolonged the war unnecessarily! And what about the Christmas bombings [against North Vietnam in December of 1972] and the attacks on Cambodia [which didn’t end until August of 1973]?” Indeed, some of Nixon’s and Kissinger’s actions were so spectacularly brutal, and unnecessary, that they almost obscure the fact of the withdrawal itself. How much more convincing, and nihilistic, can realism get?

Nixon’s diplomatic success in China came nearly two months after a heavy air bombardment of North Vietnam, which may have figured in how the Chinese leaders—the hardest of men, whose hands were freshly bloodied by the Great Cultural Revolution—sized up their American visitors. Hans Morgenthau wrote,

The prestige of a nation is its reputation for power. That reputation, the reflection of the reality of power in the mind of the observers, can be as important as the reality of power itself. What others think about us is as important as what we actually are.

In effect, Nixon and Kissinger caused copious bloodshed in Vietnam for the sake of our reputation among our Cold War adversaries: the Chinese and Soviet leaderships and their many clients, including the Syrians. Worse, as Walter Isaacson has written in his biography, Kissinger was suspicious of the whole notion of troop withdrawals that were not tied to improvement in North Vietnamese behavior: that was appeasement. Of course, there is no way to prove or disprove connections between the Nixon Administration’s cold-bloodedness in Indochina and its ability to project power elsewhere, to America’s obvious benefit. Many in the journalistic and policy communities take for granted that there is no connection. Nothing the Nixon Administration did in Indochina, therefore, is justified; a Democratic Administration would just as easily have faced down the Soviet Union and Syria without firing a shot, and would have orchestrated a rapprochement with China after withdrawing quickly from Vietnam in 1969. Might such reasoning be naive? Previous behavior is all we have to go on when we respond to others. The suggestion that leaders in China, the Soviet Union, and elsewhere would respond to Kissinger and Nixon based on their recent behavior in Vietnam is eminently reasonable. What strains credulity is the idea that our Cold War adversaries would *not* take into consideration Kissinger’s and Nixon’s bloodthirstiness in Indochina in the face of fierce criticism from the American public.

In *Decade of Decisions: American Policy Toward the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1967–1976* (1977), William B. Quandt wrote that Nixon told a group of newspaper editors at the height of the Jordan crisis that “it would not be such a bad thing if the Soviets believed he was capable of irrational action.” The strategy worked—it kept the peace in the Middle East that year without U.S. military involvement, and it kept a civilized regime in power in Jordan—perhaps in part because

Nixon had already proved his capacity for what many would call "irrational" action. Perceptions are often everything in crises, and Nixon's and Kissinger's record in foreign policy may have been more of a piece than we like to admit.

Was an unproved benefit to our international position worth the loss of so many American and other lives? No. But we will never know for certain what a weaker position in the Middle East and elsewhere might have cost us and others. In 1982, for example, the Israelis invaded Lebanon and bombed Beirut, killing thousands of innocent people. The bombing also drove Yasser Arafat out of Lebanon. From that moment on Arafat's prestige and power plummeted, until a centrist Israeli politician like the late Yitzhak Rabin could afford to recognize him without risking Israel's security. If Arafat were still running his veritable state-within-a-state in Lebanon, the peace process of the 1990s and Jordan's recognition of Israel would be unimaginable. Yet many Israelis, not to mention Arabs, still criticize the late Prime Minister Menachem Begin for bombing Beirut. Was Begin right? It depends.

"TRUTH is the successful effort to think impersonally and inhumanly," Musil wrote. Perhaps Kissinger achieved that awful level of truth in Vietnam, to judge by what he and Nixon accomplished coincident with their bloody retreat. If one feels that it is un-American to think of truth in the way that a world-weary Austrian like Musil did, then why does Kissinger's shadowy presence continue to intrude upon our most fundamental foreign-policy questions? Kissinger, seventy-five, can be judged one of our most notable and interesting modern Secretaries of State, along with Dean Acheson, George Marshall, and Henry Stimson—realists all. Americans champion idealism while employing realists, perhaps because we need to have a high opinion of ourselves while pursuing our own interests. Kissinger challenged us with a degree of realism whose origins lay partly in a youthful experience that most Americans can barely imagine.

To say that he has challenged us, of course, is not to say that he has improved us. The final judgment on both Kissinger and Nixon may be that they were not sufficiently realistic. True, they were not swayed by opinion polls, as present politicians so often are. But they did not comprehend that even if the public mood should not dictate policy, policy must nevertheless take account of it. By continuing the war after 1969, they badly misjudged the public's appetite for the conflict. Kissinger thus did not live up to the realism of his literary ideal, Metternich. The result of his brand of realism was a foreign policy that some critics call Roman in its cruelty—and in the non-realist supposition that every corner of the known world is of vital interest to the United States and must be violently defended if necessary. The fact that we have moved away from that policy shows how different

our destiny might be from that of Rome's fallen empire.

As regards Musil's inhuman truth, Kissinger's description in *A World Restored* of the peace that followed the Napoleonic Wars bears repeating, for what we may have to expect in the post-Cold War era.

When peace finally came to Europe . . . it was greeted not only with relief but with a feeling of disillusion as well. The suffering of a period of revolutionary war can be sustained only by millennial hopes, by the vision of a world free of problems. . . . Yet the greater these expectations, the more severe the inevitable disenchantment. There must come a point when it is realized that the exaltation of war is not transferable to the problems of peace, that harmony is an attribute of [wartime] coalitions but not of "legitimate" orders, that stability is not equivalent to the *consciousness* of universal reconciliation. . . . "Everything that occurred after 1815 [following the defeat of Napoleon]," Metternich wrote in 1819, "belongs to the course of ordinary history. Since 1815, our period is left to its own devices; it advances because it cannot stop, but it is no longer guided."

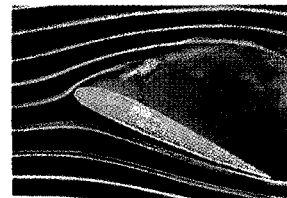
We are back to "ordinary history," with the difference between Metternich's and our own time being one of scale—demographic, environmental, technological, and military. Peaceful times are also superficial times, in which we concentrate on social imperfections because the political order appears secure, and judge Cabinet members not on how they perform but on how they perform at press conferences. Such times never last. The end of the Cold War merely set the parameters for the next struggle for survival.

As we seek perfection in our officials through an increasingly intense legal scrutiny, and reap an increasingly sallow form of mediocrity instead, there will come times—perhaps dangerous and violent times—when we will be more forgiving toward those who were supremely imperfect in their character yet unafraid to challenge the public mood. The waging of the decades-long Cold War, which rarely seemed heroic at the time (unless one had the useful corrective, as I and others did, of experiencing firsthand the subjugation of Eastern Europe), is already acquiring a valorous cast. The Soviet Union really did run an "evil empire," and during those years it was absolutely essential for us to maintain a reputation for unflinching firmness. The fact that a few leaders would go to cruel extremes might have been anticipated. Because history is by nature tragic, and because awful choices are certainly part of our future, I suspect that Kissinger—and Nixon, too—will ultimately be judged more charitably. As for Albright, she has yet to be tested nearly to the degree that Kissinger was in Vietnam. She has yet to move emotionally beyond Munich toward Kissinger's ability to turn historical debacle into strategy. ☸

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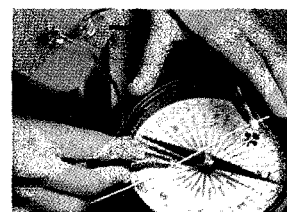
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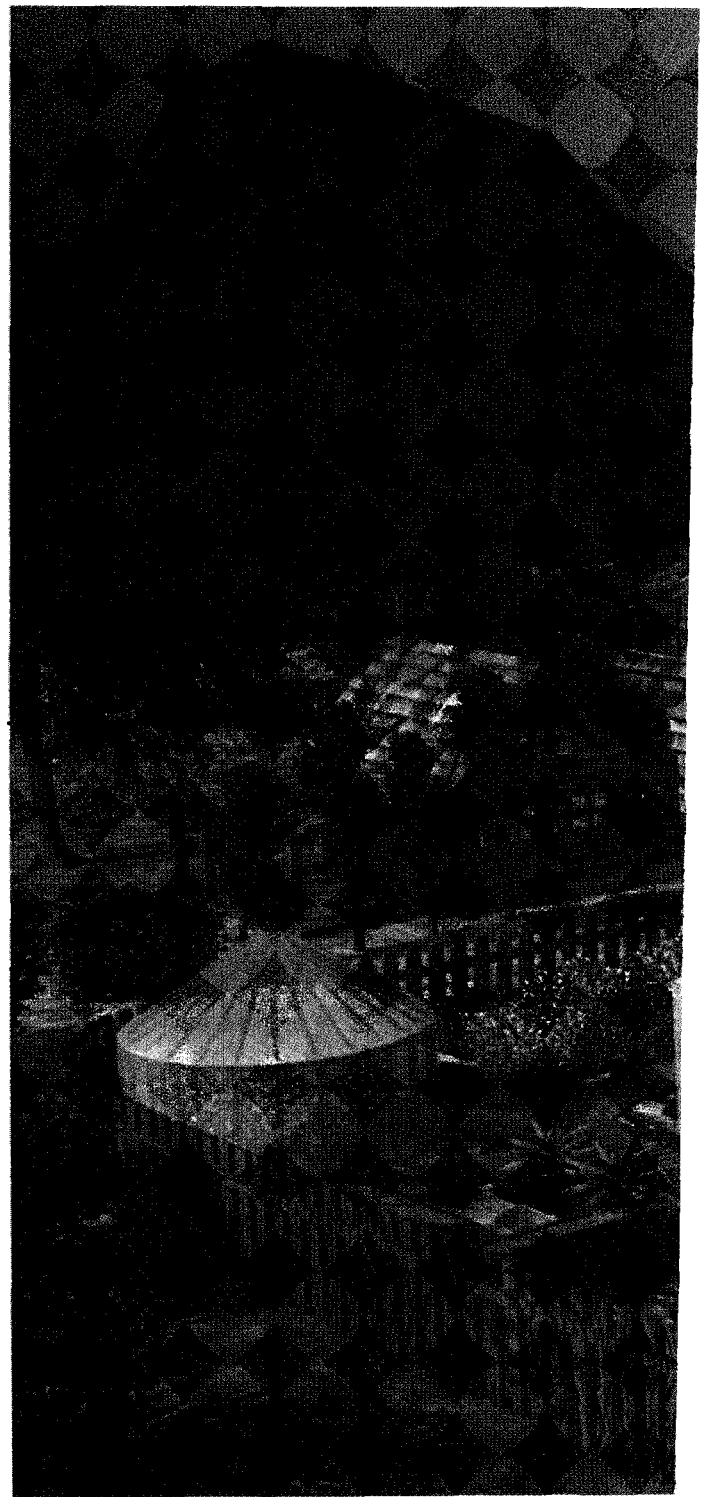
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EDEN: A GATED COMMUNITY

by WILLIAM LANGEWIESCHE

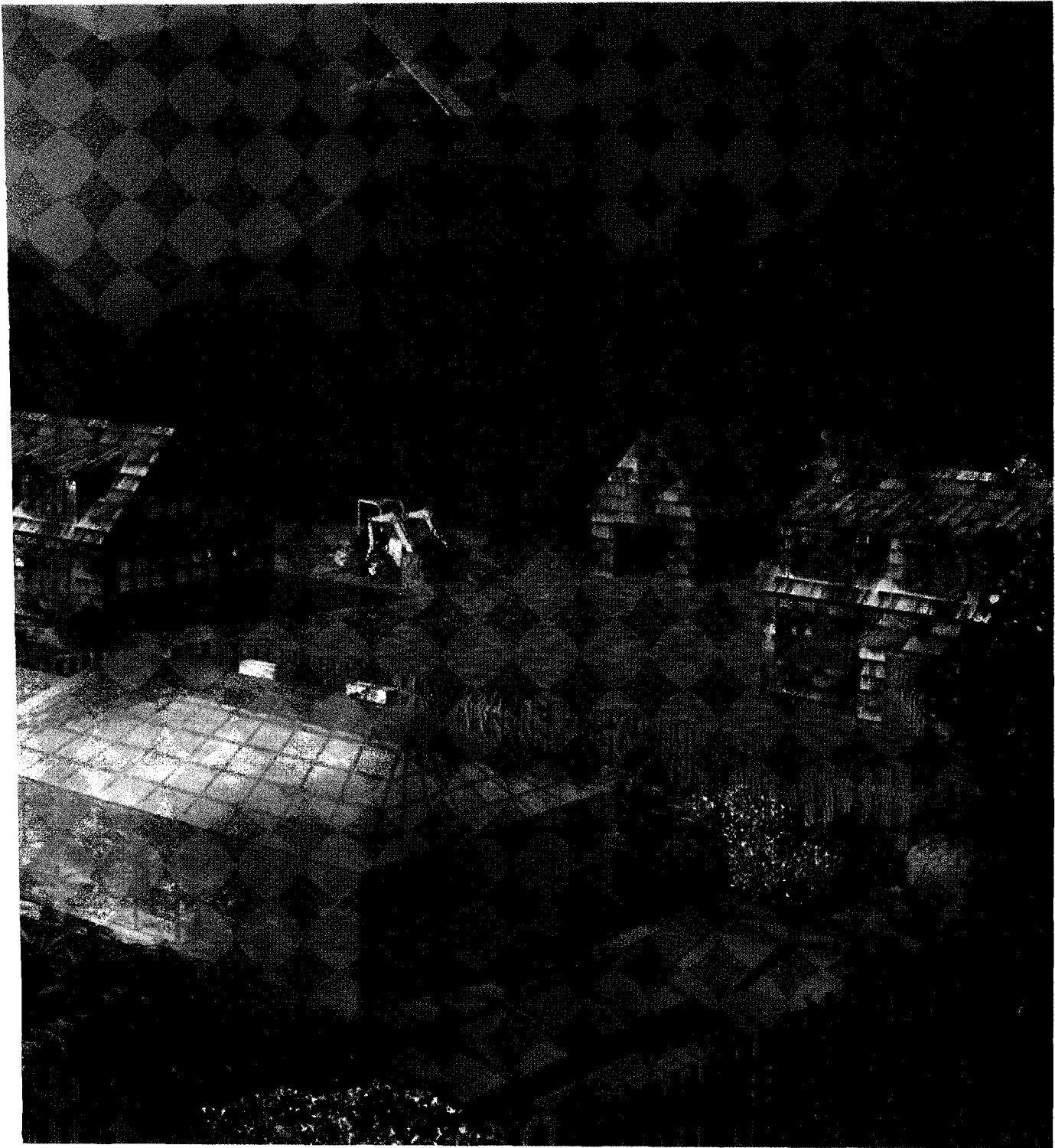
*The plot contains elements of
Lost Horizon and Heart of Darkness,
Fitzcarraldo and The Tempest.
After making a fortune as a founder
of North Face and Esprit,
Douglas Tompkins embraced the
principles of deep ecology. Then,
forsaking civilization, he
bought a Yosemite-sized piece of
wilderness in Chile, where only he
and a like-minded few would
live. They intended to show the world
how an eco-community could
flourish even as the ancient forest
was kept pristine. Tompkins ran
into one big problem:
other people*

IN southern Chile, where the Andes sink into the Pacific, on the cold and rain-soaked coast of Patagonia, lies a province called Palena. It is a mountainous land of virgin valleys and steep-walled fjords, a labyrinthine wilderness inhabited by a scattering of peasant settlers who cling to its shores, fearing the evils of the deeper forest. It is a naturalist's dream. And a big part of it is owned by a Californian, Douglas Tompkins, a rich environmentalist from San Francisco who arrived nine years ago to save the trees and today



lives besieged in an isolated fiefdom like a Crusader going down to defeat in a fight for the salvation of the world.

The capital of Palena is a town called Chaitén—a concentration of bedraggled wooden houses on a stony beach, reachable from greater Chile only by sea or by air. I met the provincial governor at his office there, on the central square. He was a plump, bearded fellow in a rumpled suit, a grandson of Chaitén's earliest settlers, and a man of unabashed resentments. He was angry about the seasonal influx of gringos who



fish and kayak in one of the local rivers and leave no wealth behind, but angrier still about Tompkins, who had come and stayed and intervened. The governor did not enter into details at first; he wanted me to understand that he could, without explanation, simply hate all foreign interlopers—and, by the way, he presumed that I was one. Without looking directly at me, he said, “You come down here thinking we are very humble, but you have found your opposition.”

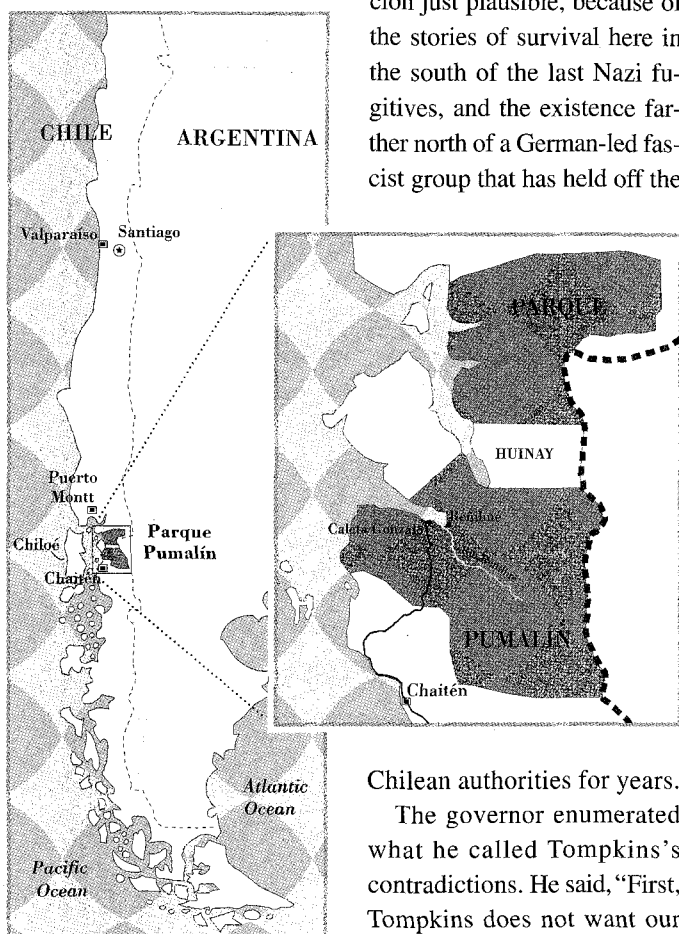
Once we got that straight, we could move on to Tomp-

kins, whose thinking the governor said he had studied. I assumed he meant that he had read the summaries being circulated by Tompkins’s opponents in Santiago, the nation’s capital. Whatever his source of information, he had the basics right. Tompkins believes in “deep ecology,” an absolutist version of environmentalism—which contains little to surprise a North American reader. It is an “ecocentric” view that rejects the idea of inherent human superiority and instead gives equal moral weight to all elements of nature—from the

living to the inanimate. The deep ecologists are purists. The governor understood the importance that they place on trying to live according to their principles, and he even knew about the Norwegian Arne Naess, an academic philosopher, now eighty-seven, whose work launched the movement.

But emotion kept getting the better of the governor. He equated deep ecology with Nazism. And he confused population control with genocide. He implied that Tompkins might be building a dangerous cult in his forest fastness—a suspicion just plausible, because of

the stories of survival here in the south of the last Nazi fugitives, and the existence farther north of a German-led fascist group that has held off the



Chilean authorities for years.

The governor enumerated what he called Tompkins's contradictions. He said, "First, Tompkins does not want our province to grow, but he him-

self has moved here. Second, he believes our settlers maybe do not need electricity, but he installs generators of his own. Third, he says he wants to save our forest, but what is his house made of?"

"His house is made of wood."

"And what does he heat it with?"

"He heats it with wood."

"So you admit the contradiction!"

I knew that Tompkins was so sincere that he harvested his firewood from dead trees coming down the rivers, but I did not want to quibble with the governor now. I said, "Tompkins disapproves of engines, but he flies his own airplanes. He believes in animal-powered farms, but he works his fields with tractors."

"More contradictions!"

"That's clear. But we all contradict ourselves—probably

even you. Maybe the Pope doesn't—I don't know. But no other Catholic is a good Catholic all the time."

The governor refused to budge. He did not need to debate these things. He had the hometown advantage, and was convinced that he would prevail.

I said, "It seems to me you're asking too much. The only way for him to avoid contradictions would be to go off and live in a cave."

The governor was pleased with the thought. He said, "And that is precisely what he should do."

THE story is full of ironies. Tompkins started his career by dropping out of high school in upstate New York and going off to climb mountains. When he was still very young, he moved to San Francisco, where he founded and then sold the North Face climbing-equipment company. He is rich because he then co-founded Esprit, a clothing company that became very big and did business all over the world. Throughout that time he continued to take off several months a year to run rivers and climb mountains. He was not a faddist; it was obvious to those who knew him that he genuinely loved the outdoors. Nonetheless, it came as a surprise when at the height of his success he embraced the essentially anti-materialistic teachings of another mountaineer, the deep ecologist Arne Naess. His wife and business partner, Susie Tompkins, thought he had lost his mind. He thought he had found it. He was tired of business, tired of the empty social life of San Francisco, tired of the empty consumerism that Esprit had come to represent to him. He and his wife divorced, and he sold his share of Esprit. In 1990 he endowed the Foundation for Deep Ecology, in San Francisco, and cast around for what to do next. His children were grown. He was not yet fifty. He wanted to live as if his thinking mattered.

He came to Palena on a tourist visa that same year and moved into a candlelit hut on a fjord where the rainfall amounted to eighteen feet a year. He did not mind the rain. The land was like a paradise to him, and it was cheap. For approximately \$12 million he assembled a thousand square miles of untouched nature, a tract the size of Yosemite through which rivers flowed with pure drinking water past stands of ancient alerces—redwood-like trees that grow only in that part of the world. He wanted to lock it away and keep it pristine, not for himself but for nature. After a few years he got married again, to Kristine McDivitt, an old acquaintance from southern California who as a part owner of the company called Patagonia had made a fortune of her own in the clothing business. She quit her job, moved to Palena, and threw herself into the conservation project. She was used to managing things, but it was still very much his show. He thought that he would establish a park and give it to Chile, that Chile would be grateful, and that then perhaps he would leave. He thought he might be given honorary citizenship. And, of course, he was wrong.

Chile in effect refused his gift, and in the years since has

grown so hostile to Tompkins that strategies against him are openly discussed in the national senate. To his allies in far-away San Francisco, Tompkins appears to be engaged in a struggle against the arrogant, cynical oligarchy of a corrupt nation. But here in this insecure and newly democratic country it is Tompkins—the righteous Californian, actively backed by the U.S. embassy—who seems increasingly to represent the arrogance of power. While insisting on his rights as a foreign investor—in a nation built on foreign investment—he is spending an apparently unlimited fortune to pursue his surprising ambitions. He has sidestepped the government with plans to create a private Chilean foundation to which he will deed the land to be locked away in perpetuity. He has funded environmentalist groups throughout the country. And he has set about building an eco-community of workers' hamlets, visitors' facilities, and organic demonstration farms on his property—a dispersed utopia meant to demonstrate a better way of living. The scale of his generosity in a country with no philanthropic tradition suggests to many Chileans that he anticipates their wholesale conversion.

Over the years I have often heard Tompkins mentioned in Chile, by all sorts of people, and rarely in a positive way. He has become infamous. When the newsweekly *Qué Pasa* wants to boost its sales on the streets of Santiago, it runs him on the cover, because he is so widely distrusted. It is a strange fate for a man who thought he would be loved. He had done business in dozens of countries, and believed therefore that he knew his way around. He thought that the world was shrinking. And he seems to find it hard to change his mind now—to accept that the world is larger than he realized, and that the people who bought his products will also reject his views. Tompkins continues to live on a tourist visa as if he might not stay, but he has trapped himself in a forest of his own making.

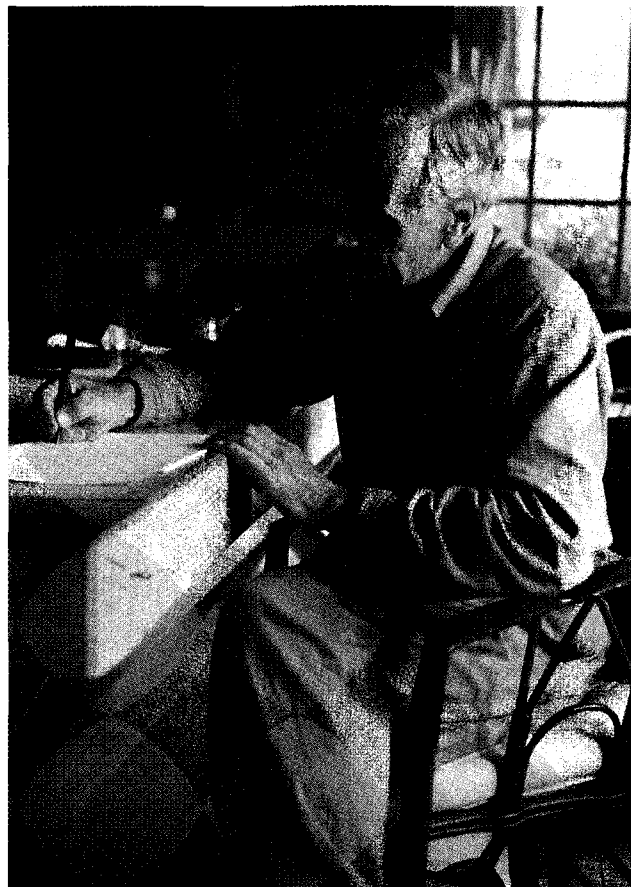
A MISSIONARY IN THE RAIN FOREST

HE calls his land Parque Pumalín, after the pumas that roam its forests. The only way there by ground is on a rough dirt road from Chaitén, thirty-five miles north through uninhabited coastal mountains. I paid a man with a truck to take me. It was a grinding ride on a warm late-summer afternoon, up slow-turning valleys, through tall broadleaf trees. The sunlight was speckled and faintly green. Ferns and saplings sprouted through the rubble on the shoulders of the road in dusty tangles that masked the denser growth of the forest. Now and then a view opened on a conical snow-capped volcano rising to the east: the 9,000-foot Michimahuida, which is the southernmost of Tompkins's mountains, and is cut by a glacier descending in a graceful curve from near its summit.

My driver was a small, fine-featured man, a diesel me-

chanic with a young family in Chaitén. We stopped for a rest, and drank together from a roadside rivulet. I asked him about Tompkins. He was cautious and said that he did not know him. He was more willing to talk about Tompkins's wife, who has been shielded even by the opposition from serious attack. The driver called her a good woman who cared about the people. He did not know her either. He was repeating what he had heard.

We kept going, and passed two lakes. Eventually we en-



Douglas Tompkins at his home in Reñihué

tered Tompkins's land, where nothing changed until suddenly, in the middle of this wilderness, we came upon an incongruous wooden gateway that framed the path to a set of beautifully constructed tent platforms. It was the first of many such projects over the final several miles: picnic areas, viewpoints, carved wooden signs, and an alerce "interpretive" trail, with which Tompkins has tried to make the best of a pre-existing condition—a public right-of-way through this corner of his preserve.

The road descended into a valley, and ended on the shore of a fjord, at a ferry landing called Caleta Gonzalo—a concrete ramp served in the summer by a thirty-car ferry that steams a hundred miles north. *Caleta* means "cove." *Gonzalo* is the name of the river that empties into the sea a short walk from the ramp. To accommodate travelers there, Tompkins built the most incongruous of his tourist facilities—an exquisite little

complex of campground, café, and light-filled cabins, all beige and bare wood in perfect California-country taste, plumbed with pure mountain water, and powered by means of a water-turbine generator. Tompkins awarded the concession to a local settler, the wife of his boatman, who hired two city girls and a baker to work for the summer season. On the evening I got there, only one cabin was occupied—by a German couple who had arrived by ferry. They liked the baker's whole-grain bread and the fresh vegetables from the organic farm next door, but confided to me that they were disconcerted to find themselves suddenly in a place so unlike South America. We spoke at the café, where a Smith & Hawken clock hung on the wall. In accented English the man murmured, "Ya, it's rather *peculiar* here, do you think?" I said I wasn't sure.

There was to be an outdoor *asado* that night, a celebratory meat roast at the end of a three-day holiday that Kris McDivitt had organized for the children of the families who worked for the preserve. I was expected there. I crossed the Gonzalo River on a suspended footbridge and walked through a pasture to the cooking fire. Douglas Tompkins sat alone on the ground with his arms around his knees and his back half turned to the flames—a slight, gray, unshaven man, as spare as a New England farmer, dressed in a homespun sweater, coarse cotton pants, and rubber boots. He had crooked teeth and a gaunt and pensive face. He asked about my trip from Chaitén, and explained that Kris and the children were washing up before the meal, after a hike on one of the nature trails.

I sat beside him, and we talked about the unusually dry weather—two weeks without rain. His voice was sparse, gravelly, faintly nasal. He said he had just come by boat twelve miles down the fjord from his homestead at Reñihué—once the site of his candlelit hut, and now the largest and most private of his hamlets, accessible only by small boat or airplane. I thought he looked old for his age but, with his lopsided smile, also fleetingly boyish. His gaze was indirect—not shy but willfully modest, like that of a man holding himself back and suffering from an abundance of certainties.

I asked him how he passed his time. By the light of the fire he showed me his soil-stained hands. He said he had labored all day in a field at Reñihué, digging out the stumps of old trees. He said he was surprised to find himself doing such work at this stage in his life, and surprised by the satisfaction it gave him. Some of the roots ran nine feet deep. He insisted that he was not tired. He would have kept digging longer, but had broken off early for the children's *asado*. Kris had told him he had to. He meant that he was an ordinary guy, a regular fellow.

But when I asked how many people he employed, I saw a flash of another Tompkins. Some of his critics had accused him of destroying jobs. He eyed me sharply, as if he weren't sure what to make of my question. He said, "You've been talking to them?"

"Yes," I said.

"Well, you need to, you see. And you need to tell them that last I counted, I'm the biggest employer in the whole Goddamned province of Palena. I've got more than a hundred and fifty people here, over a hundred in construction alone. These are jobs that didn't *exist* before."

But his opponents had already pointed out that these jobs were temporary. Their quarrel with Tompkins was about the removal of so much land from the possibility of exploitation; it was about jobs in the future. Tompkins must have understood the argument. I suspected that his anger was in part with himself, for having to talk about jobs in the first place when what he really cared about was preservation. He must have felt the frustration of an environmentalist who heard himself sounding like the very developers he wanted to stand against. He was in a bind. He might have found it easier to forget his principles, but then he would have lost his reason for being here.

He said, "Everything we *do* here comes down to defense. We try to anticipate the attacks, sure. But mostly we just say, 'Okay, what is it now? How do we deal with this one?'" His tone was ironic. He had accepted the need to accommodate Chile—to help the surrounding settlers with their lives, and to invest in this public-access part of the preserve—and he was annoyed that his critics had seized on these accommodations and called them contradictions, as if they had caught him cheating.

But then he laughed, and shook off the mood. He said the governor, poor guy, was suffering from isolation. A similar thought occurred to me in Chaitén, when the governor refused to discuss the possibility that Tompkins might be an honest though misguided man.

Tompkins, too, was suffering from isolation, though more like that of a king. It was probably unavoidable. He remembered his own beginnings clearly, and tried to maintain a connection to ordinary life, but to an extent greater than he realized he had been cut off by his success. Digging roots in a field? The effect of his isolation was a peculiar magnanimity—for instance, in his unnecessary urging that I find his critics and hear them out. It struck me that within this public attitude of openness lay a private message of disdain. I heard it again when he laughed off the governor. Thirty-five miles of road separated Caleta Gonzalo from Chaitén, but a still greater distance separated the two men. Tompkins seemed to think that the governor lacked the power to hurt him.

THE project's critics did not usually linger at Caleta Gonzalo, but in the guest book at the café a few had expressed their distrust.

- Mr. Tompkins: I feel like a foreigner in my own country. The cabins are beautiful, done with Chilean hands, but you put your stamp on them: \$\$\$.
- Mr. Tompkins: Americans *always* protect their interests. I don't want a fiefdom within my country. I don't believe anything you say. I hope that my country is also my grand-

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son's. [Someone had answered: "If Tompkins were Chilean he'd be turning these forests into wood chips. Is that what you'd like?"]

• Mr. Tompkins: If you want to create a nature sanctuary, that's good. But if you want to take our land from us, that's bad. Think about it, because one should not play under the hooves of horses. P.S. I am a young man who loves his country, and I am willing to give my life for it. Take that well into account.

But Tompkins preferred to focus on the other inscriptions—conventional words of praise, written by guests who had come to Caleta Gonzalo because they approved of the project already. At the *asado* Tompkins asked me if I had leafed through the guest book. The question struck me as sad. He mentioned a national poll that he believed showed that most Chileans had come to think as he did. I thought, He does not see the trouble he is in.

Sparks from the cooking fire rose into the night above the outlines of black mountains. The employees' children chattered happily over their meal of goat, beans, and organic salad. Tompkins said that because of

the severity of the climate and the shortness of the growing season, people here still had to get many of their calories from meat. He put a serving of goat on his plate but did not eat it. He said he hoped to persuade the settlers to build cheap plastic-covered greenhouses, and to improve their diets.

Kris McDivitt finally had a moment free, and came over to sit with us. She was an unadorned woman, not yet fifty, with a square, athletic build, streaked gray hair, and a lively, intelligent face. Her voice was strong and direct. I asked her about the children. She said they had gathered from the farthest reaches of the property for a few days of fun before the start of the school year. Tompkins added that the holiday was supposed to be educational too—part of a larger effort, critical to the preserve's survival, to teach future generations of settlers a more caring attitude toward the forest. McDivitt agreed with him in theory, but said that in practice it was not the forest but Caleta Gonzalo that drew these children. It offered them the excitement of a city—the comings and goings of travelers from far away, and new friends, and a café, and, perhaps most of all, a road leading out into the larger world.

Tompkins let out a scornful laugh. "A road leading out to Chaitén," he said. "Like the world is in Goddamned Chaitén."

"For them it is," McDivitt said.

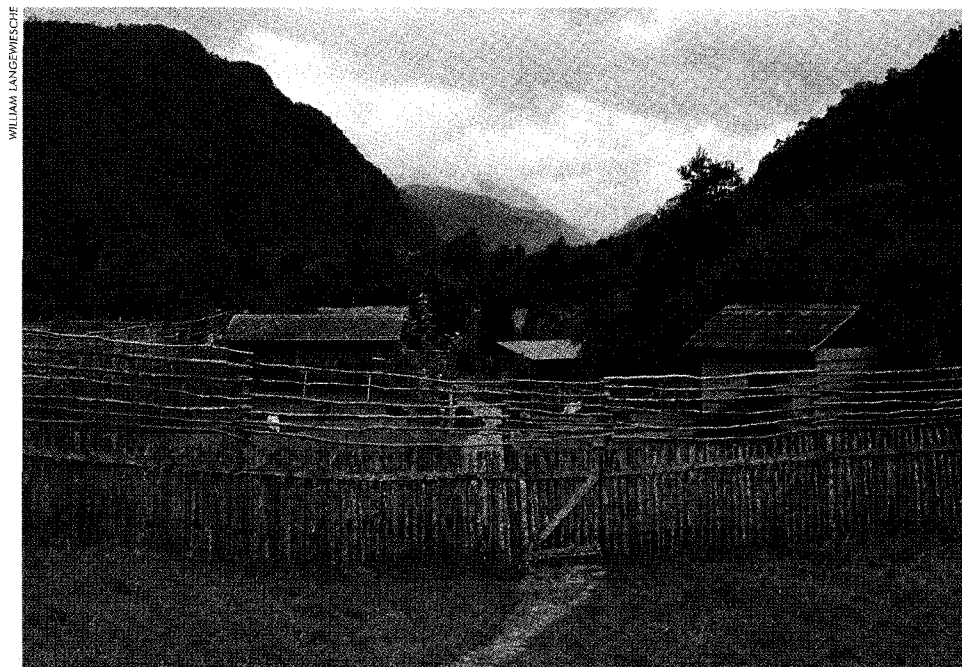
"How'd the walk go?" he asked.

"We tried to show them something about the trees. We talked about the alerces. But, I don't know, they weren't really into it. Luis said his feet hurt."

Tompkins was incredulous. "His feet hurt?"

McDivitt eyed him evenly. "His feet hurt. And the other kids just wanted to play."

She was admirably American, I thought, in the flatness



The organic vegetable farm at the Caleta Gonzalo complex

of her delivery, in her pragmatism, in the way she stood her ground. Tompkins seemed to think so too. He looked her over. "Anyway, they're just kids," he said, as if he had not forgotten. I thought, Whether he loves this woman by choice or by intuition, he must know that she is in some ways what he needs to be.

The conversation drifted to McDivitt's earlier career in California, and to her business partner Yvon Chouinard, who even after becoming very rich continued to drive a ratty old car. In Los Angeles this was considered to be eccentric behavior. But Tompkins called it a natural progression. He said, "First comes the display of wealth—that's a Cadillac. Then comes the display of style—that's the BMW. Then comes the mockery of style—that's Yvon Chouinard. In Chile there's a lot of display of wealth, and a bit of display of style, but you can forget about the mockery." I thought he was about to acknowledge the gulf between Americans and Chileans. But instead he merely said that Chouinard had visited Parque Pumalín and had liked it very much.

McDivitt went off to put the children to bed. The air turned cool, and a group of vacationing Chilean college kids wandered over from the campground and appeared in the fading

firelight. One of them added wood to the embers, and with studied nonchalance they watched the little flames that erupted, and stood warming themselves shoulder to shoulder with Tompkins. There were about twenty of them, transient students of the determinedly concerned kind—sincere, idealistic, and a bit rebellious, but also, ultimately, perhaps too well behaved. They were still awkward with their adulthood, and had to strain to maintain the pretense of informality with Tompkins, a man whom—however temporarily—they seemed to adore.

I had seen adoration for him before—perhaps more enduring—in the distant city of Puerto Montt, among the bare-foot young women who worked in the preserve's front office. They were serious, dignified, and a little standoffish, but they glowed when they talked about Tompkins. Their office was a sunlit refuge from the strivings of the city—a remodeled mansion behind high garden walls. It had blond wood floors and an immaculate atrium with a sign that read, in English,

- WE ARE THE FIRST generation in 100,000 generations of human evolution to have our lives shaped—not by nature—but by an electronic mass media environment of our own making.
- LIKE CAGED ANIMALS we have lost our bearings. Our attention spans are flickering near zero, our imaginations are giving out, and we are unable to remember the past.

The students at the campfire now expected to hear just these sorts of ideas. Tompkins stood among them like a penitent priest, slightly stooped, with his head tilted forward and his hands dangling loosely at his sides. Someone asked him a casual question, and he answered it briefly in his sloppy Spanish; after a silence someone asked another question, and this time his answer took longer. This went on until only Tompkins still stood and spoke, and the students had arranged themselves on the ground and sat listening to him in silence. He had just finished telling me that he never preached. But now he held forth for two hours, expounding on the need for a “new Copernican revolution” in which nature is no longer seen to turn around man, and arguing that capitalism has failed as surely as communism, but that there is a third way, and it is green. The students never once disagreed or asked for practical detail, though Tompkins was the rare man who could have provided it to them. Some nodded their heads in understanding or agreement, and seemed to grow sleepy. Tompkins continued to talk: the gross national product is a measure of the conversion of nature to culture; the techno-industrial juggernaut is a bulldozer unleashed on the world; *The New York Times* is the mouthpiece of transnational corporations; Santiago is an octopus reaching out and devouring the Chilean land.

It was an astonishing performance. Toward midnight a student shyly raised his hand. “*Una pregunta*. How much time do we have?”

Tompkins said, “It may already be too late.”

But he, for one, was not ready to quit. He continued to speak, about the ecologist Aldo Leopold's advice to “save the pieces,” and the need to bear witness to the folly of the world's self-destruction. Some of his audience eased away. I wondered if he was still preaching, hoping for conversions, trying to lead Chile to its salvation, or if by now he was just speaking to himself about his day spent digging in the fields. I no longer quite heard his words anyway, but studied him as if he were a reflection of me. I thought, He has my New England taste for the austere, for straight lines and a simplicity that in South America seems impossibly severe. His forest was a forest of symbols he did not see. His voice barely broke the silence of the mountains. I watched him across the fire, this Puritan faced with winter, this Pilgrim, this small hunched man in his fisherman's clothes, so abandoned to his beliefs.

INSIDE AN ECO-COMPOUND

IN the morning a dry wind called *puelche* blew through the mountains, and settlers for hundreds of miles set the forest on fire. The sky turned white with smoke. We loaded a wooden skiff with sacks of supplies, shoved off from Caleta Gonzalo, and headed up the fjord for the inner world of Reñihué. Four of us were aboard—Tompkins, McDivitt, I, and one of the employees, an affable young outdoorsman named Andrés, who had been educated at an expensive school in Santiago and had once tried to form a commune. His job now was to build up the organic farm in Gonzalo, primarily to supply the café with vegetables. He was going to Reñihué today in the hope of catching another ride to the main demonstration farm, which was under construction in the strategic pass between this fjord and the next, a low place called Pillán.

Tompkins sat in the skiff's stern, steering with the outboard motor, looking tense and angry. He had radioed to Reñihué to send his pilot out on a patrol, and he knew that so far the fires had not spread to his preserve. But it was clear that such petty distinctions did not matter to him: none of the wilderness was his, or all of it was, and he suffered personally when damage was done to any part of it. The situation was grave. In southern Chile during the past few days about 50,000 acres had burned. The flames did not kill the biggest trees, but they might as well have. By burning through the walls of undergrowth, they opened the way to settlers who came in and harvested the standing timber and introduced cattle, and so patch by patch continued to consume the forest and wreck its fragile soil—a band of havoc visible from the air as a brown cancer spreading along the coast and up the valleys into the pristine green of the Andes.

I knew something already about that pattern, because during the previous two years I had set off with a Chilean friend among the settlers, and had walked along their foot trails and slept in their clearings, and had heard their hostility toward the forests that besieged them. Not even Indians, it is said,

were able to penetrate this interior—which may explain why they completely disappeared, killed off or absorbed by the European peasants who colonized the outlying island called Chiloé in the sixteenth century. Those colonists became Chilotes, a famously poor and isolated people who, as a result of just the sort of environmental exhaustion that Tompkins fears, have over the past hundred years fled by boat to hack holdings into the wild forests of the mainland. It has been a hard exile. I met settlers three generations distant from Chiloé who still regretted the loss of their home. They lived in lonely cabins that, were it not for the plastic litter, would have fit into the Appalachian frontier of two centuries ago. They survived by cutting wood, planting potatoes, and keeping a few animals—and on the coast by scavenging for shellfish and collecting seaweed to sell to passing boats. They had enough contact with greater Chile to see themselves at times as heroic nation-builders. But in truth they lived here because they had no choice. Even after three generations they still hated this place for its rot, its moss, its fallen trees, and its winters of incessant rain, when they had to get drunk, they said, to keep from going insane. They were like we used to be. They hated nature.

Tompkins knew about their hatred. The fires today seemed all the worse because they had been allowed to spread onto fragile slopes too steep and denuded to be of use to anyone. From his place in the back of the boat Tompkins pointed to a column of smoke boiling above a ridgeline to the north. Over the roar of the outboard he shouted, “That’s a typical stupid guy. He started that burn yesterday. My man goes over there and says, ‘Hey, you’d better watch your fire here!’ And the guy says no! ‘No, nothing’s going to happen. This is the way we always do it.’ And then he goes to sleep in his little house over there, in the middle of the day, and of course the fire takes right off. Today it’s burning up the whole side of the mountain.” Tompkins smiled bitterly. “And does anyone care?”

Andrés, the Gonzalo farm manager, wanted to explain. Earlier he had pointed to a school of dolphins, and then to a colony of sea lions along the fjord’s rocky shore. At one point he said, “This is the most virgin place in the world, I’m sure of it. They made a study. It’s because the woods are so thick. If you go in for a distance, you will know the feeling. There is so much bamboo and underbrush that you can’t walk upright, because something will always go into your eyes, so after a week you stand bent over like a prehistoric man. And then when it rains ten days, twenty days, thirty days, there is nothing dry. The humidity is everywhere. Even if you’ve got everything in plastic bags, the humidity will get in anyway. I don’t know how, but it will do it. So then you start getting crazy. The first thing you start thinking about is Where can I get warmth? How can I make a fire? The fire has to be big, but that’s not easy, because everything is wet.

“And then suddenly you’ve had fifteen days of sun and

puelche, and this only happens every few years, and so you just go for it. You don’t worry about making your land pretty, cleaning it up, maybe saving some trees. You don’t worry about whether you really *need* this part of the forest. No. It’s the burning season, and burning is in your genes. So you go and put fire to the brush, and you sit down and drink some *maté* and let the world burn.”

THE difference from Tompkins’s way of living could not then have been clearer. Reñihué first appeared as a gap at the top of the fjord—a steep-walled valley sweeping down from the wild mountains to the east, cradling a river that pushed a delta into the sea. The valley floor was flat, and about two miles wide. The snow-capped Michimahuida volcano rose beyond it, floating above the haze. Against the scale of that scene our approach was slow. Only at the end could we make out the shore itself, a wide and treeless tidal flat covered with bright salt grass. We threaded past three moored workboats, followed a series of stakes marking the channel, cut the motor, and drifted in to nose against a gentle embankment. The silence then was absolute, unbroken even by the lapping of water. The hamlet of Reñihué lay on slightly higher ground, just out of sight beyond the first tended pastures, ten minutes by foot up an immaculate gravel trail.

I call Reñihué a hamlet for want of a better word. It was once a pioneering ranch, a slash-and-burn cattle operation that gradually consumed the valley until by the 1980s it had been largely abandoned, leaving a scattering of tenant-settlers and feral cattle to a few miserable cabins and stump-littered fields. Tompkins bought the place—a 20,000-acre spread at the heart of his future preserve for the price, he told me, of a lousy condominium in San Francisco—and set about returning the upper valley to its natural state, rounding up all the wild cattle except for one wily cow who hid in the brush. Tompkins moved the settlers out as well, but only from Reñihué’s upper valley, and under generous terms: he paid them to dismantle their cabins and haul away their trash, and he offered them permanent jobs in lower Reñihué at the 1,000-acre farm that he would keep for himself once he gave the surrounding land to Chile. Those who took him up on the offer moved to a place very different from anything they could have imagined.

I call it a hamlet because it was more compact than a settlement and more intimate than a village—a colony of gray-shingled houses, connected by slatted wooden walkways, set among greenhouses and gardens bursting with vegetables and flowers. Tompkins is a furiously creative man, and he designed it alone, building a place so unexpected on the Chilean frontier that it seemed at times to be a fantasy. But it was more than that. Forty people lived there year-round. At one end stood an elegant schoolhouse, with a big kitchen and a single large classroom on the ground floor, and quarters above for guests and the two teachers. At the other end, among trees, was a dormitory capable of lodging a dozen

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people. Most of the houses were in between; with spare wooden floors and natural light Tompkins had made of each one an exercise in the aesthetics of simplicity. To the extent possible he had used existing structures and recycled materials, but his work was not a casual thing. His tenants were his employees. He did not charge them rent, but he expected them to remove their shoes indoors, as he did, and to respect the beauty that surrounded them.

He and McDivitt lived in a house at the center, in the semi-privacy of a garden, facing north across the main pathway toward a grass landing strip and a wooden hangar in which two small airplanes were kept. The house was a two-story structure, a remake of the original farmhouse. Its typically uncluttered interior was centered on an open kitchen and illuminated by large windows looking out onto grass and trees. The cooking was done on an efficient wood-burning stove, which also provided hot running water and, by means of a gravity-siphon system, heated radiators throughout the house. There was no refrigeration, and during the day there was no electric power, here or anywhere in Reñihué. There was no telephone, computer, satellite connection, or fax machine. There was not even a typewriter. There was a ground-floor office with crowded bookshelves. But it was primarily the long, rough-hewn dining table in the main room that served as a desk. Tompkins sat there in profound concentration while he read and answered his correspondence and wrote orders to the staff in fluid long-hand. In her matter-of-fact way McDivitt did the same.

Their purpose remained the preservation of the wild forest, but it was the detailed peripheral work of building the farms and communities that had come to consume their time. I had the impression that there were moments when they would have preferred to be alone and far away: during the few hours each night that the Reñihué generator ran, they turned on electric lights and prepared delicate salads and perfect pasta, or lounged on the sofas by the fireplace and listened to opera. But even then they were often interrupted by people coming to discuss the day's residual problems: Two chickens were dead. A cow looked sick. A pipe had burst at a badly welded seam. A trespasser had been spotted twenty miles away. Oh, and Alfonso was shirking his school-cleaning duties again, while Carolina was going around saying someone took her sweater. This was very specific stuff for a generalist like Tompkins, who managed nonetheless to keep thinking in global terms.

One evening he said to me, "We want people to be able to look over here and see that somehow our little community thrives. When people realize that you're trying to make things thrive, and that if things thrive it will be good for everybody, it's not all that hard to get them interested in what you're doing, you see. We've got the big honeybee project starting up over at Pillán, and we're telling people, 'Hey, if you're interested in bees, come over any time and talk to our beekeepers, and see if they can help you.' People like that. We also try

to get involved in areas where the macro-economy is going against people anyway, which is what's happening here with cows. I go to cow auctions now, and I've learned a lot about cows and the market, and what the problems are. So we sit around with the farmers and talk about our cows. I never thought I was going to talk about cows! There are too many cows, and the cows are put in the wrong places. These people are burning up the sides of the mountains, and running their cattle up on rocky terrain, and they're biting into the forest. But if they could learn that there's value in the hills with flowering trees, and they could make an income between fishing on the coast and making knitwear and finding an outlet for it like the café in Gonzalo, and then they could have bees and honey instead of running cattle up the sides of mountains—maybe this would be *helpful*. What we're doing here is intimately integrating a social program with an environmental program. I think about this every day, all day, even while I'm working in the fields. How to make our little local community work. It's about the preservation of the agrarian mind."

During another of Tompkins's musings, about Nestlé's dominance in the Chilean milk market, Kris McDivitt smiled and said to me, "Please, wait, just a moment, that's lecture two-eighty-seven-C-three. Remember the file and you won't have to *hear* what he thinks about Nestlé. You'll know it's in there somewhere."

Tompkins said, "She's got them numbered."

She was too sharp to philosophize, and too experienced. It surprised me that such a woman could fall as much in love with an old acquaintance as she clearly had with Tompkins. A Santiagan who knows them both said to me, "Poor lady, I pity her, she has had to put up with a lot." But in Reñihué I got the impression that she puts up with what she chooses to.

One afternoon, while walking with me through the upper pastures, she got annoyed when I called Reñihué a utopia, because she associated the word with impracticality. She said, "It's a word that completely misses the point of what we're doing here." I understood her to mean that utopias lie beyond her concerns. She never talked to me about Reñihué's purpose. She preferred simply to describe the workings of what she called the community.

Aside from the two Americans, the community at Reñihué included three beekeepers, two gardeners, two teachers, a farm manager, a bulldozer driver, a backhoe driver, a tractor driver, a housekeeper, a boatman, a pilot, a slew of girlfriends, wives, and children, and variable numbers of seasonal farmhands and overnight visitors from other parts of the project. The pay was on the high side of normal for the area. The employees worked six days a week, with Sundays off. They rarely went to town, because town was too far away. They rarely even went to Caletto Gonzalo. Fifteen typewritten pages spelled out the code of conduct. The first section began, "*Honesty*. We hope that all employees will be honest. We will not accept dishonest acts like thefts and lies. There are no grades to dishonesty. Ei-

ther you lie or you don't lie, either you steal or you don't steal. There is no such thing as partial dishonesty."

There were also rules against drunkenness, drug use, violent behavior, and the possession of firearms. Of course there was no television. Garbage had to be separated and appropriately recycled, burned in the household stoves, or, if it was organic matter, turned over to the community compost collector. A housing inspector made regular rounds with a checklist, and when necessary ordered the chimneys to be cleaned.



Some of Parque Pumalin's alerce trees

There was an emergency plan for lighting the runway's edges with flashlights in case an airplane got caught out after dark.

The list went on. Each employee had the right to graze one cow, to breed it with the Reñihué bull, and to keep the calf for six months. The alternative was to keep five sheep, but this was risky, because of the pumas in the forest. Every family had to buy two chickens and pay a nominal monthly fee toward the chicken operation, in return for which it received six to fifteen eggs a week. In addition, every family received produce from the garden, including lettuce, garlic, squash, peas, beans, cucumbers, tomatoes, and huge numbers of potatoes. The planting and harvesting of the potatoes had become communal events in which even the children got involved. Other communal events included communions and baptisms, religious and national holidays, various celebratory *asados* associated with the farm work, and an annual folk-music

weekend that attracted settlers from a hundred miles around.

The most sensitive part of Reñihué was the school, which had seventeen students, in kindergarten through sixth grade. In order to allay suspicions that Tompkins was indoctrinating the children, or running a cult, the school was strictly maintained as a public institution, checked by government inspectors, and led by a government-salaried teacher who adhered closely to the national standards. Tompkins paid the salary of the second teacher, and discreetly supplemented the classes with offerings of folk music, organic gardening, sports, and (at the parents' request) English. The regulation lunches were quietly "augmented" with fresh milk, whole-grain bread, and vegetables from the garden.

All that, and the ordinary functioning of the far-flung operation, was overseen by McDivitt, who during my stay walked every morning before breakfast to the boatman's house for scheduled radio calls—to outposts around the fjord, and to Puerto Montt, Chaitén, and beyond. She listened to weather reports, responded to the first of the morning's problems, amended her earlier instructions for the day's work, and began again the regular task of juggling the necessary movements of people, airplanes, and boats. She said she liked the sense of its all coming together. "Caleta, Caleta, Reñihué," she would call. Crammed into a corner under the boatman's stairway, the radio crackled and squealed and often did not respond. "Caleta, Caleta, Reñihué." It was just as well that she did not dream about utopia.

The truth was, since moving to the forest she had become something of a radio buff. In a system parallel to the big fixed-station units, she had equipped the key people throughout the fjord with hand-held VHF transceivers, which she bought by the dozen from a store in Los Angeles, and which, she believed, had drawn the community closer together by keeping people in touch during the day.

She liked all radios, including the little AM receivers that the employees carried around for listening to soccer games and personal news. When I asked about this, she told me that personal messages were broadcast during the regional news hour, from twelve to one. "'Here is a message for Francisco Pérez in Reñihué: your mother sends her love; she was in Puerto Montt yesterday. Happy birthday Carlos Chamat in Chaitén from your cousin Hector. Make sure you're on the bus tomorrow: your parents will be waiting for you.' It's all done by radio! It's very interesting, when you listen to it. And it's a formal system."

I said, "You know, we have it in the U.S., too, on the border. Some of the *norteño* stations in Mexico broadcast messages."

"Is that right? I really like it. I like everything it implies—that there are still places where you can't get, where there's no phone, where you can't call, where you can't send a letter."

I said, "There are a lot of places like that. Like here. In the world."

"Fine by me."

Fine by Tompkins, too, I imagined, though he was so caught up in his thinking about global problems that he probably found it hard to appreciate such practical details of daily life. That was the difference between this husband and this wife. It surfaced again one evening during a tussle about the school curriculum. Reñihué had recently been presented with a choice between a new national “rural” curriculum emphasizing carpentry and manual skills and a “modern” curriculum intended to prepare children for high school—in this case at one of the boarding schools in Puerto Montt or in a town on Chiloé. Tompkins was pleased with the idea of a rural curriculum, which he took as a vindication of his beliefs. But it was up to the parents to decide on the school’s

direction, and it seemed likely that they would opt for modernity. McDivitt understood why.

She said, “There’s a split, because there are some kids here who will be farmers. But many are going to go on to high school outside, and their parents are concerned that they’ll be behind when they hit the urban setting. It’s baloney, because the town schools are terrible—forty-five students in a class, and teachers who are worn out, sort of whipped. But it’s also understandable. The parents don’t want to worry that somehow they’re hanging up their kids. They want their kids to prepare themselves for what they see will be the necessary skills in the future, which are *not* shop and farming and fishing and gardening but rather . . .”

THE DRESS

In those days, those days which exist for me only as the most elusive memory now,
when often the first sound you’d hear in the morning would be a storm of birdsong,
then the soft cllop of the hooves of the horse hauling a milk wagon down your block,

and the last sound at night as likely as not would be your father pulling up in his car,
having worked late again, always late, and going heavily down to the cellar, to the furnace,
to shake out the ashes and damp the draft before he came upstairs to fall into bed—

in those long-ago days, women, my mother, my friends’ mothers, our neighbors,
all the women I knew, wore, often much of the day, what were called housedresses,
cheap, printed, pulpy, seemingly purposefully shapeless light cotton shifts,

that you wore over your nightgown and, when you had to go to look for a child,
hang wash on the line, or run down to the grocery store on the corner, under a coat,
the twisted hem of the nightgown, always lank and yellowed, dangling beneath.

More than the curlers some of the women seemed constantly to have in their hair,
in preparation for a great event—a ball, one would think—that never came to pass;
more than the way most women’s faces not only were never made up during the day,

but seemed scraped, bleached, and, with their plucked eyebrows, scarily masklike;
more than all that it was those dresses that made women so unknowable and forbidding,
adepts of enigmas to which men could have no access, and boys no conception.

Only later would I see the dresses also as a proclamation: that in your dim kitchen,
your cellar, your bleak concrete yard, what you revealed of yourself was a fabulation;
your real sensual nature, veiled in those sexless vestments, was utterly your dominion.

"Computer operating," Tompkins said scornfully.

"... English, computer operating, and stuff. And they're not wrong, necessarily, in the culture that they see. They're not wrong!"

Tompkins said, "Well, that's another story. I disagree with you about whether they're right or wrong. Because the right or wrong of it depends on what kind of a world you think your children should go into."

"No, Doug. That is not the statement. These parents are rural"—she hesitated—"agricultural workers. And what they see—let's take Magali and Vincente specifically, then we can take Juan and Amalia separately. They think that to prepare their kids . . ."

"I know," Tompkins interrupted. "But when you say they're not wrong, what do you mean they're not wrong about?"

She spoke emphatically. "In the culture that they are encouraging their kids to move *toward*, and that they hope their kids will participate *in*, those are the skills that people are looking for. In that sense I'm not wrong."

"I'll tell you where you're wrong. They want the best for their kids, agreed?"

"They do."

"Now, you have to find out what's best for their kids! I don't agree that they're right from their point of view, because I don't think they've got the point of view right."

In those days, one hid much else as well: grown men didn't embrace one another, unless someone had died, and not always then; you shook hands or, at a ball game, thumped your friend's back and exchanged blows meant to be codes for affection;

once out of childhood you'd never again know the shock of your father's whiskers on your cheek, not until mores at last had evolved, and you could hug another man, then hold on for a moment, then even kiss (your father's bristles white and stiff now).

What release finally, the embrace: though we were wary—it seemed so audacious—how much unspoken joy there was in that affirmation of equality and communion, no matter how much misunderstanding and pain had passed between you by then.

We knew so little in those days, as little as now, I suppose, about healing those hurts: even the women, in their best dresses, with beads and sequins sewn on the bodice, even in lipstick and mascara, their hair aflow, could only stand wringing their hands,

begging for peace, while father and son, like thugs, like thieves, like Romans, simmered and hissed and hated, inflicting sorrows that endured, the worst anyway, through the kiss and embrace, bleeding from brother to brother into the generations.

In those days there was still countryside close to the city, farms, cornfields, cows; even not far from our building with its blurred brick and long shadowy hallway you could find tracts with hills and trees you could pretend were mountains and forests.

Or you could go out by yourself even to a half-block-long empty lot, into the bushes: like a creature of leaves you'd lurk, crouched, crawling, simplified, savage, alone; already there was wanting to be simpler, wanting, when they called you, never to go back.

—C. K. WILLIAMS

"You're taking it to the second step. I'm taking it to the first."

They were dancing, turning around each other, not needing to agree. He was an authentic missionary, and she was his necessarily practical wife. A century ago they would have struggled like this for the conversion of Africa. I had the impression I was watching a modern version of an old theater piece. The script required McDivitt to grow silent after a while. Tompkins began to talk about the burning of the Black Sea.

HERE in the Chilean forest the fires had ended. A rain fell on Reñihué in heavy sheets that deepened the night. The generator switched off on schedule, at 11:30. I went outside with a flashlight and walked up the trail toward the upper pastures, feeling as alone and exposed to the weather as any animal in a storm. Tompkins would have understood that walk. A Chilean who had known him for years had said to me, "He had such an easy life, traveling the world in pursuit of beauty, that he started to think of everything in those terms—started to think that the whole world can be beautiful, or that it should be." But Tompkins described a different start—a mountain climber's pursuit not of extravagant beauty but of just the sort of primordial darkness that surrounded me now. He said, "I'd go back somewhere, and I'd be hanging off the wall in my hammock and I'd look out and suddenly I'd see lights I'd never seen before: shit, they'd built something here, too. This went on for years. I saw the wilderness disappearing."

He saw the darkness disappearing. In public he insisted that his goals were limited to creating Parque Pumalín—the nicest national park in Chile—but in private his thoughts were grim and determinedly apocalyptic. He was convinced that a global collapse was already well under way—a catastrophic unraveling that was so much a part of our time that people had trouble recognizing it. His own employees wanted to turn their kids into computer operators. Tompkins was fighting here at the end of the world for nothing less than the last perfect nights.

He was not exactly a survivalist. He assumed that he and his grown children in California would share the fate of society. But he understood Parque Pumalín in a desperate, post-apocalyptic way, as a place that might demonstrate to future generations what the earth had lost, along with, perhaps, holding the seeds for what it might be again.

I saw the park through his eyes in the morning, when we went for a flight in a tandem-seat Husky—a small bush air-

plane, which Tompkins flew at extremely low altitudes—away from the tourist facilities at Gonzalo, away from the demonstration farms on the Reñihué fjord, past the scorched mountainside of that "stupid guy" to the north, and on into the wild and untouched core. Tompkins was an excellent pilot, with a fluid backcountry style. We flew lower than the forest top up violent rivers and over gravel banks and boulders, and then climbed the sides of V-shaped valleys past soaring condors and precarious stands of trees, and squeezed through barren passes,



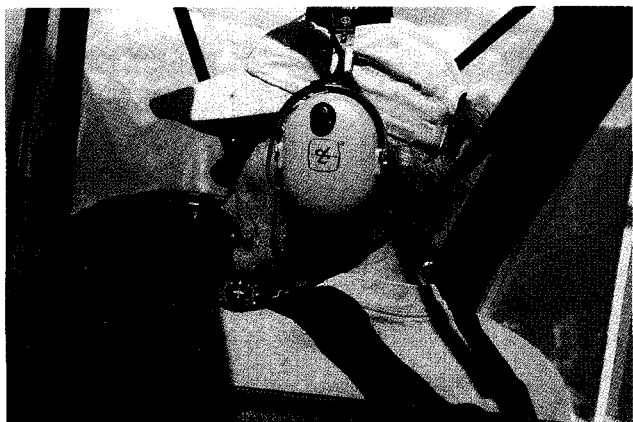
Glacial runoff, linking the Andes and the sea

and wandered in high mountain air among the snowy peaks and the rock-soiled glaciers of the Argentine border.

Across the far northern border of the property we descended into a forested valley where a family of settlers stood in a clearing and waved. They lived in a cluster of cabins by a split-rail corral, three days upriver by horse from the nearest boat landing. Tompkins was giving them money and technical assistance to improve their farm. His purpose was to keep them off the preserve and to sustain them here against

the incursions of other settlers who, like agents of the apocalypse, were filtering into the valley below. They served as his sentinels. He was paying them to build a runway in one of their pastures. Their greeting pleased him.

We ranged again through the park, and came eventually to its upper coast, which we followed south toward Reñihué, past strings of settlers' cabins along the gravel beaches. Tompkins knew the people here by name, and had reached agreements—however expensive—with most of them. He sug-



Douglas Tompkins at the controls of his Husky

gested in his ironic way that the price was right if it meant that somehow the wilderness might yet survive. But a problem remained, and it was a big one. He gestured toward a cluster of cabins by the mouth of a river, and to the valleys and mountains that lay beyond.

This land was called Huinay, an inholding of 125 square miles that belonged to the Catholic University of Valparaíso and sliced through the wildest part of Tompkins's land, dividing Parque Pumalín in two. Huinay contained a fortune in unexploited forests, and possibly also in hydroelectric power and minerals; though it was still wild, it was unlikely to remain so if it fell into the wrong hands. Moreover, because of Huinay's potential to disrupt the watersheds and divide the preserve into biologically undersized units, Tompkins believed that any development there would weaken or even kill the entire project. It was crucial, he said, that he acquire Huinay.

He came close in 1997, agreeing with the university on a price of \$2 million, but the deal was blocked by his opponents in Santiago, who claimed that they were in part concerned about the fate of the Huinay settlers, and who indeed probably were. They disliked Tompkins in principle as well as in practice, and wanted Huinay to represent the Chilean wilderness as they saw it, not as he did. Backed by the U.S. embassy (which made noises about free trade), Tompkins argued that his rights had been trampled. The Chilean President intervened and the government imposed a cooling-off period of one year, during which Tompkins was to make no major purchases. Tompkins quietly promised the university that he would beat any serious offers that were made during that

time. He had faith in the power of his money. But now, not quite a year later, it seemed that perhaps he had misjudged. *Qué Pasa* had again run his face on its cover, and in the story inside had attacked him over the standoff on Huinay. Something new was afoot. As we flew overhead, Tompkins admitted that he was worried.

Word came by radio to Reñihué that same afternoon, and it was worse than he had feared. McDivitt was the first to hear. She walked into the house looking angry, and handed Tompkins a note. He read it, glanced at her, and passed it on to me. The deal was done: Huinay had just been sold for about \$2 million—to Endesa, a voracious Chilean energy company that had recently been thwarted on a major dam-building project by environmentalist groups funded in part by Tompkins. The symbolism of Endesa's move was immediately clear. This was a neatly reciprocative attack. Tompkins had split Chile's territory, and now Chile had returned to split his preserve. Tompkins had fought to protect the darkness of the Patagonian night, and the people chosen to fight him back were precisely the bringers of light. They did not need to dam up the rivers of Huinay to achieve their purpose. In fact it was better that they did not try: the mere possibility of such hydroelectric projects could diminish Tompkins's plans in his own mind for the rest of his life. I did not expect Tompkins to appreciate the perfection of the attack. I asked him what he thought. He smiled grimly and said, "We'll have to see if this is real." He had the calm of a man with a knife in his gut. He did not feel the pain yet because he was in shock.

THE END OF DARKNESS

TOMPKINS had a smart attorney in Santiago, an influential conservative named Pedro Pablo Gutiérrez, who disagreed with his politics but worried about Chile's. Soon after the fall of Huinay, Gutiérrez told me, "We are about to throw away a man simply because we do not share his beliefs. This we must not do." He was right, of course. He also said, "Tompkins is not a bad man, and even his enemies must know it. If anything he has shamed them with his generosity. He is honest, and honorable, and well-intentioned. But, please excuse me, he is also a typical innocent gringo." He was right about that, too.

Despite all the evidence to the contrary, Tompkins kept insisting that people everywhere are the same. Depending on his mood, this could be a bad or a good thing. On the one hand, he worried about the "monoculturing of the world." On the other hand, he was persuaded that reasonable Chileans would come around to his ways. That conviction made their apathy—or glee—after Endesa's acquisition of Huinay all the more perplexing. For a few days he held out hope for a student strike at the Catholic University of Valparaíso, but unfortunately for Tompkins nothing of significance occurred. The students were busy with their studies.

In the final analysis, the opposition to Parque Pumalín seemed to be a mystery to Tompkins. He could shrug off the attacks of the ultranationalists, the little fascist groups that had put up threatening TOMPKINS OUT OF CHILE! posters in Puerto Montt. He could puzzle out the politics of power in Santiago. He could see through the greed of the various commercial interests. No doubt after a while he would be able again to eye Endesa evenly. But he could not understand the deepest of all the problems that he faced here—the wide-



Outside the park, settlers gathering seaweed

spread Chilean discomfort with the way he had treated the local settlers. These were the very people with whom he believed he had been most fair. He recalled every detail of his dealings with them, and was very sure of his position. He retained his sense of irony, and never whined. Nonetheless, even before the fall of Huinay there had been a certain tone of bewilderment and hurt in his stories.

It lay just beneath the surface, for instance, of a story he told me of a patrol he had made with his boatman, Juan, up the preserve's northern coast, during which they had spotted a wooden fishing boat nestled against the shore by a tree that had been cut down. "Right on our property!" Tompkins said. "We get out our little binoculars, and my God, these guys are there in broad daylight with their axes. The tree is already down, and the crown has fallen in the water, and the rest of it is on shore, and there they are, chopping away, shaping this thing. Jeez, we steam up there, and Juan is outraged, so I figure I'll stay back and let him deal with it. Juan doesn't like to trifle with these guys. So he goes over and says, 'You're on private land. This tree doesn't belong to you. You're stealing it. So you'd better get out of here!'"

"The other guy's a fisherman. Juan gets his name, and the boat's name and identity number, and so forth. The fisherman's from sixty miles away, across the gulf. He says, 'What do I do with the tree?'"

"Juan says, 'What the hell do you mean?'"

"Well, it's already cut down."

"Are you joking? You can't take that tree! *Forget* that tree! Get the hell out of here!"

"So Juan and I go on inside the little fjord there to see what else is going on, because at the time another guy was renting a little piece of land there, and what do we find? He's in there shooting birds! He's got a shotgun! We go up to him and say, 'Hey, you can't shoot these birds! It's illegal to shoot wild birds in Chile!' So we got *that* sorted out, and now we're steaming around the inner fjord, and all of a sudden we see the fisherman's boat coming toward us.

"I say, 'Well, here he comes, Juan. What's he gonna ask?'"

"He's gonna ask for the tree."

"Sure enough! We slow down, the guy jumps out of his boat, he gets in his little rowboat, he rows over to us, he climbs up onto our boat, he throws out his hand, shakes hands with me. I say, 'You know you cut that tree on our land.'"

"Oh, I know," he says. He's got his hat in his hands. "I didn't think the land was owned by anybody."

"Not owned?"

"I thought it was government land."

"Fine, but you're not allowed to cut down government trees either."

"Well . . ."

"So I say, 'You know, I gotta tell you, we own a lot of land here. It goes all the way down the Comau fjord and almost to Chaitén.' I say, 'You know, the native forests of Chile are disappearing at an ever faster rate, and, ah, we're kind of in the business of saving the trees.'"

"The fisherman's standing there saying, 'Yes, sir, yes, sir,' and he's looking around, and I *know* what he's thinking. He's looking around, and everywhere he can *see* it's solid trees! And he's thinking, 'If you ask me, this guy's crazy. He's got five hundred million trees here, and he's hassling me about this one tree I need.'"

They negotiated. It was not just any tree the fisherman had cut down but one with a curved trunk that could be made into a replacement sternpost for his boat. Tompkins asked him how much it would have cost him at his local boatyard. The fisherman tried 7,000 pesos, about twenty dollars, and when Tompkins laughed, he immediately doubled the figure, which was still too low.

"I say, 'Well, how much money do you have on you?'"

"None, señor. I came over here without a peso in my pocket."

"Is that right? What do you do?"

"I'm a fisherman."

"Well, then, you got any fish?"

"No, no, we haven't fished at all. We just came over here to get this tree."

"Oh, well, geez, you don't have fish, you don't have money—I mean, what can we do here? How can we settle the score?"

"But the tree's already down. And we've been working on it all day."

"It's like he's got squatter's rights to it. I say, 'You

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know, you're lucky. We've got a caretaker up here, and Jesus, if he'd caught you and we didn't happen to come along—I mean, that guy's tough. He's under orders to take no prisoners.'

"'Oh, yeah.'

"I'm kind of joking with him in a way, but he's not sure exactly how much. I say, 'But you're lucky you ran into a gringo. We're a little easier.'

"'Yes, sir!' he says. 'Yes, sir!'"

Tompkins finally gave the fisherman his sternpost in return for a promise to tell his friends about the new deal in Palena—never again come to this forest to spoil a tree. When he told me the story, it still amused him. But I understood now that in some ways it upset him, too. He saw the sale of Huinay as an undeserved attack. Despite what his enemies were saying, he believed absolutely in his own goodness.

OF course, the fisherman was merely a transient woodcutter. A greater challenge had been posed by the permanent settlers, most of whom were squatters. Although Chilean law in theory allowed them to acquire their land, few of them had bothered with the required paperwork. Why should they have? They respected one another's homesteads, and cut wood and grazed their cattle where they pleased. They hated nature because there was so much of it to go around. Five hundred million trees? The forest was big enough for everyone until Tompkins came and took it away.

He was friendly while he did it. He offered to buy any small properties that the settlers were willing to sell, whether they held those properties informally or by law. In the cases where people lived on land that was already his, he offered to buy their "improvements." And because he paid well, some settlers did sell out and, thanking their good fortune, bought houses in town or simply drifted on. But many settlers chose stubbornly to stay, and that is how the complications began.

At the start there were abuses by Tompkins's men, who bullied the holdouts by exploiting their legal uncertainties and threatening to expropriate their land. When Tompkins found out, he fired the offenders and set to work, case by case and at great expense, to repair the damage. But there was another kind of bullying going on, which Tompkins was less able to stop. It was his own presence in the neigh-

borhood, his intention to buy land, the mere proximity of his wealth. His money was a fright. The settlers started scrambling to secure clear titles, only to discover that the legal process was more difficult than they had thought—that it required documents they lacked and advice they could not afford, and that for technical reasons some might have no claim to the land at all. It was their own fault, of course, but they were right to blame Tompkins, too. He was a good man who was doing them wrong.

In typical fashion, Tompkins responded to the problem directly by launching a team of property specialists whose job was to roam the forest and help the settlers to secure their titles. By the time I arrived, the project had grown to involve dozens of claims and official surveys. Where ambiguities existed along the preserve's boundaries, Tompkins was ceding strips of land to his neighbors in order to avoid any quarrels. And in at least one case he had simply given away a piece of land in order to help a family. His purpose, of course, was to settle the settlers. But he also believed in the principles here—that the clear delineation of property was in everyone's interest, and that the settlers must be given the



West of Caleta Gonzalo, water trade with Reñihué gets under way

full protection of Chilean law. This left the settlers with the problem of having no obvious reason to disagree with him. While Tompkins had gone about earnestly respecting their rights, they sensed that he was hemming them in, and they resented it. Despite the fall of Huinay, Tompkins believed he would continue to win over at least these local people, and that ultimately this would save the project. But they were aware of Endesa's victory, and it had encouraged them. They were small people, but their resistance to Tompkins had quietly grown stronger.

I got a ride up the coast in a wooden cargo boat operated by a man named Lolo Méndez, who did business with Tompkins and thought of him as a friend. He was angry about the upsurge in the settlers' opposition, which he saw as the betrayal of an honorable man. He said, "Now it's even those who work at Reñihué! The moment they leave, they turn against him."

"Why, do you think?"

Lolo Méndez spat derisively. "Why?" He used the characterization that Tompkins tended to use. He said, "Because they are stupid people—you will see."

On the remote coast beyond Caleta Gonzalo I met two brothers so ornery that they had to beat off their own dogs with sticks. They lived in a clearing in primitive cabins, on land that backed onto the preserve. Tompkins had sent out a surveyor to measure an additional strip of forest for them, but they had pulled up the stakes and thrown them into the sea.

One brother said to me, "I don't believe any man will just give away his land."

I said, "But if Tompkins did, would you still have a problem with him?"

"Yes, still. Tompkins will always be a problem for us. The rich man will always take advantage of the poor."

I walked a mile up the coast and met their neighbor, a mostly toothless woman named Clementina, whose husband had drowned while returning on horseback from filing a claim against Tompkins in Chaitén. Clementina lived with her three grown sons in a cabin above a stone beach. The family survived by cutting trees on a mountainside deep inside Tompkins's land, in a patch of virgin forest which they insisted belonged to them. They dragged the heavy logs with oxen and chains to the cabin, where they sawed them into rough planks for shipment twice a year to Puerto Montt.

Clementina said, "Tompkins *acts* nice, but I know he's not. He dresses the way we do, but he has to, because he's an *ecologista*. Once he came over here and tried to buy my property. He stood where you are standing, in his wool cap, and he said, 'I can give you a house somewhere.' He waved his hand around, so I figured it would be a shitty house. Plus, he waved his hand toward Chiloé, and I don't want to live on Chiloé. I told him to go away."

I walked away thinking that Lolo Méndez was perhaps right about the intelligence of these people. Certainly there was stupidity in the opposition, especially among the provincial fascist groups, who over the years had propounded any number of theories to explain Tompkins's hidden intent: he was an Israeli agent sent to create a new Jewish state, an Argentine agent sent to acquire a path to the Pacific, a CIA agent sent for God knows what, a drug lord, a lumber lord, an oil lord, a miner, an abortionist, an anarchist, or perhaps the Antichrist himself. This was the stuff of comedy, and it would not have posed a problem for Tompkins except that it had one unexpected consequence: it had encouraged him to underestimate the validity, and therefore the strength

and endurance, of the more serious opposition in Santiago.

His confusion was in part linguistic. In the mid-1990s, as concern about Tompkins's presence deepened and matured, the issue was taken up by senior military officers—a rigidly traditionalist group of men who, despite civilian rule, remained unapologetically involved in overseeing all aspects of the nation's affairs. Whether this was good or bad is beside the point—they simply did not share the U.S. military's shyness about such things. And when they discovered that Tompkins had acquired a large part of Palena province in order to block development there, they voiced their objection to him in the language of "strategic interests" and "national security." To Tompkins, this sounded so outlandish that it could be laughed away. He tended already to picture South American soldiers as cartoonish. To me he said, "Hey, if they want to run their tanks through here, I sure can't stop them!" That was true. But he misunderstood the language that they used. As a North American, he thought they were speaking only about war.

In fact they were expressing legitimate civil concerns as well. Tompkins thought he should not get involved in Chilean politics, but with his disproportionate wealth and his development-blocking Parque Pumalín, he inevitably had. Was it outlandish to believe that he might pose a threat to Chile's future—if only by Chilean standards, and in one part of the country? Was it outlandish to be concerned that as a perpetual visitor on a tourist visa, he was operating outside the Chilean democratic process? Tompkins was indeed a foreign agent, though less intentionally than the fascists supposed. He represented a nation of such concentrated wealth that one of its worries was the very excess of success. And that nation was not Chile.

In Santiago I mentioned Tompkins's foreignness to a venerable senator named Gabriel Valdés, who is widely respected for his integrity and the imprisonment that he suffered under the Pinochet dictatorship. Valdés said, "We must find a way not to attack him personally, it is true. But that does not mean we must agree to his plans. There must be limits to foreign investment. Look, we are Catholics. Now comes this idea that humanity has to be controlled, that the earth has been overpopulated, that people are the moral equivalents of animals, plants, and even stone. I admit that this philosophy shocks us, our culture, ourselves, *myself*. Its criticism of the Occident is very strong.

"It can be discussed at the university, and it should be, but when you make a link in practice between the theory and a certain person who owns so much of your territory, you must ask yourself, 'What will happen to us now?' This idea does not come from Norway, as they say, but from the United States, a great power! What is our country compared with that? Look at the map. It is narrow and fragile, and very uncertain. Put yourself in our place. Is it not understandable that we would feel our sovereignty has been threatened? Tompkins says that only *he* will decide how the land is used. But

what does he know? We don't want a desert in Palena either. But we will not be shoved aside."

The arguments Gabriel Valdéz made were strong, because they were considered. Tompkins had confused Palena with a human void, when in truth it was a nation's "empty place," not a wilderness but a mystical frontier that was heroic and hopeful, and into which any Chilean could flee, if only in the imagination. In that sense the settlers, however mindlessly, represented a national freedom. And Tompkins, with his global concerns and his reasonings and delineations, represented that freedom's end.

Valdéz put it this way: He had a friend in the Department of Forestry who returned from a visit to Reñihué and said, "I was so much impressed, it's true. Everything there was so nice, so perfect, so beautiful. But after a while I realized I was horrified, too. It was so . . . *uniform*. It was *overwhelming*. I thought, 'Is *this* how we must be protected against our crazy civilization?'"

Antonio Horvath, a powerful senator from the south, said to me, "Palena is Patagonia, and Patagonia is a dreamland." Horvath was the settlers' defender, an ex-engineer and road builder with the soul and voice of a poet. He lovingly described a 400-year parade of dreamers in these forests, and he generously included Tompkins in it, although Tompkins was his opponent. He called the parade the search for El Dorado. He said that he himself dreamed of populating Patagonia with a million people—not, I sensed, because he thought he could, but because the number sounded good. He was a very South American man.

Horvath savored the idea that Tompkins unwittingly had helped him. "Before Douglas Tompkins arrived here, Chile really had no development policy for Palena. The settlers there were neglected. The property lines were uncertain. And the province was slowly losing population—the young people were leaving the forest for the cities. But Tompkins will have changed all that. By sticking his finger in the wound, he will finally have made Palena a part of Chile."

He was glad that Endesa had acquired Huinay, because the company had promised to support a pet project of his there—an eccentric nation-building scheme that had been under way since 1987, three years before Tompkins's arrival. It consisted of regular visits by a group of idealistic architects who had built a station by the river and were now working with the Huinay settlers to construct a "research" boat for the symbolic "re-exploration" of the Patagonian coast. These architects were known throughout Chile as the Locos of Valparaíso. They came from the same Catholic University that had betrayed Tompkins, where they inhabited a free "town" of temporary structures whose explicit purpose was to work out the balance between man and nature. Their boat-building project in Huinay was part of a larger, long-term effort to undo the brutality of the Spanish Conquest and symbolically to refound America according to a new geographic

sensitivity. For forty years the Locos had left Valparaíso and wandered from Tierra del Fuego to the Caribbean Sea, following roughly the pattern of the Southern Cross, erecting small structures and crosses, and performing spontaneous readings and ceremonies whose purpose was the "recolonization" of the continent in purely poetic terms. This sort of thing was of course difficult for North Americans to understand. It is said that when the Locos encountered Tompkins at Huinay, he cut short their explanation with a curt "I don't know anything about poetry." And as a result, they, too, had turned against him.

AFTER the fall of Huinay, Tompkins continued furiously to construct his defenses. His focus now was necessarily on building the demonstration farms—the second half of his struggle to settle the settlers within the confines of property lines. The future he envisioned involved intelligent little subsistence farms of the sort one might expect to see in the valleys of coastal Oregon: well-composted, animal-powered, happy-to-barter organic produce, milk, and honeybee operations. To make it even tidier, there was the long-term payoff: if the right formula could be found, the very agents of the preserve's destruction might be converted into its defenders—a ring of satisfied families facing outward to keep the apocalypse at bay. It was classic Tompkins. Parque Pumalín was perhaps not a utopia, but it offered the appeal of a perpetual-motion machine.

But Tompkins had made a crucial mistake. In 1997, having seen the need for the demonstration farms, he had decided to build them in a rush, with an army of men and machinery. The problem this posed was not philosophical but practical: the way he was building his farms had nothing to do with the way the settlers would have to build theirs. Tompkins promised that later, for the actual operation of the farms, no machinery would be needed.

To me he said, "Having some capital, we can afford to invest in making this farm, which would take a family fifty years of blood, sweat, and tears—we can make it in two years! You know, just *get* one, so we've got something to show that acts as the demonstration point within this small community. We can say, 'Well, look, this is what we learned here. Let's try this.'"

His implication, of course, was that the settlers would forget how the demonstration farms had been built. But they were among the men doing the work.

I asked one of the original Reñihué farmers about old times, before Tompkins arrived. We sat in his cabin at Pillán, above the main demonstration farm, on a typical day of driving rain. He said, "We had only shovels. In all the years, through all that time, we had only one tractor on this whole fjord."

I said, "When you look at what Tompkins has done here, what do you think?"

He said brightly, "Money came."

"Sure, but do you think he has something to teach people about farming?"

"Oh, yes. He has tractors and bulldozers, so people can learn from that! Look down there—all those machines!"

I sloshed through the mud and overflowing creeks to the big new barn at Pillán—the place where the honey will be gathered. The farm manager there was an athletic, black-bearded agronomist with long hair in ringlets and a gold earring. He was a tough, hard worker, used to speaking his mind.



WILLIAM LANGWIESCHE

The hamlet at Reñihué, the heart of Tompkins's wilderness domain

He distrusted the word "demonstration," because he had heard too many of the settlers' frank appraisals of the project. He said he wanted to call the farm "experimental," if anything, and to use less equipment, and to bother less with the aesthetics, and to plant the first crops. He was worried about Tompkins. He said he found it hard to take Tompkins's environmentalism seriously. I assured him that he should. He said if this farm was truly meant to be the preserve's defense, it was going in too fast and too late.

McDivitt had left on a business trip to Los Angeles. I said good-bye to Tompkins with regret. Huinay now stood within his project like a Trojan horse. He had written a bitter public denunciation of his enemies, threatening to take back the promised gift of a park—which his attorney Gutiérrez had wisely managed to kill before its release. The good that had come out of Huinay was that Tompkins perhaps had a better sense of his opposition. But he rejected the idea that he needed an image cleanup, a public-relations campaign. He preferred to argue the issues. His disagreement with the Chileans was genuine. He remained an absolute idealist.

The opposition, meanwhile, was feeding on itself in reinforcing cycles among the settlers, the governor, and Santiago.

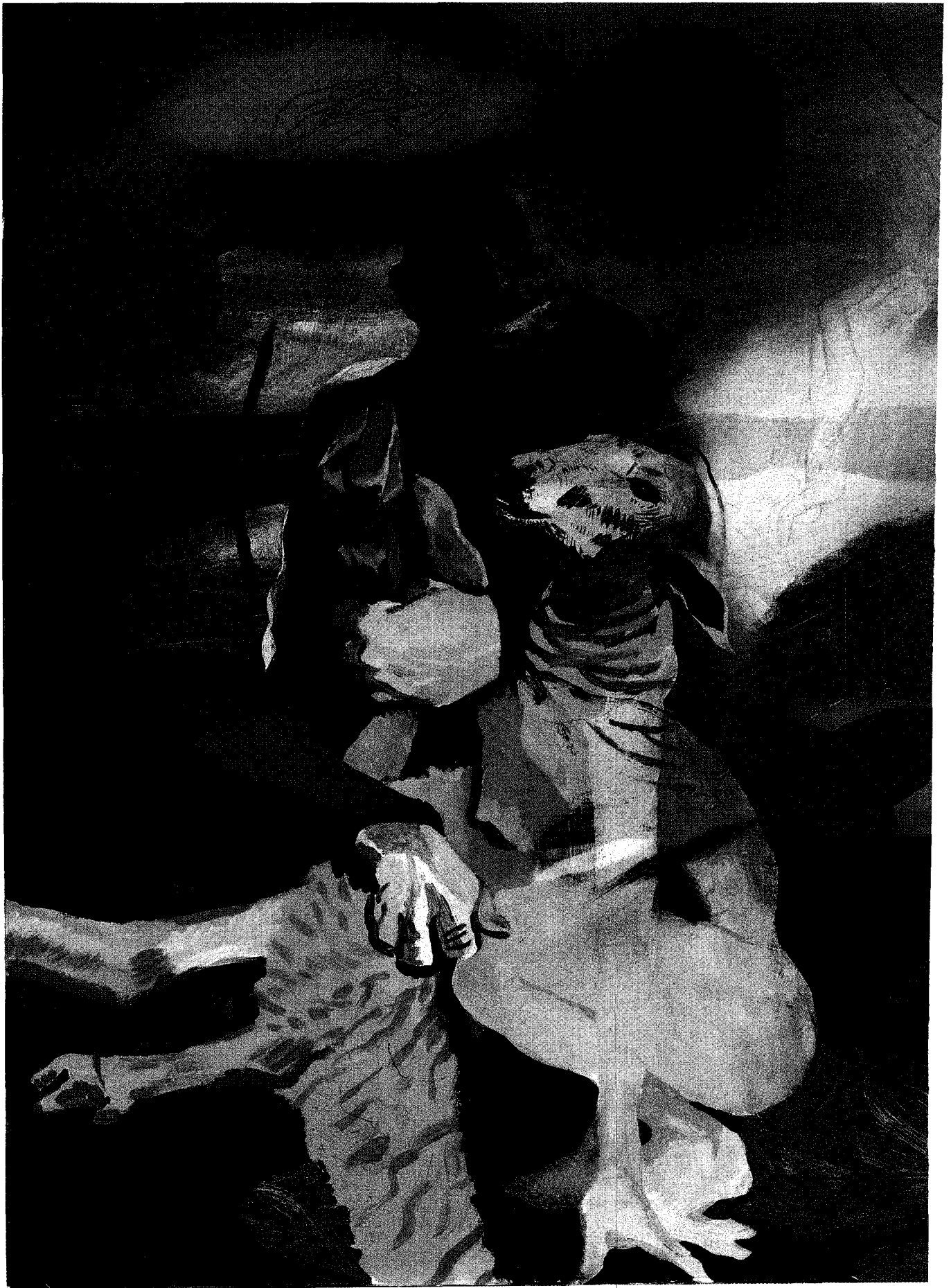
The pressure was beginning to cause cracks inside the project. McDivitt might have noticed them; I assumed that Tompkins had not. A sullen rebellion had broken out over at Pillán, where the workers insulted Tompkins when he was not there. The details are not important: they threw the word "stupid" back at him, and laughed about his sense of beauty, and cursed his selfishness for having ploughed over their soccer field—small things, it's true, but in an atmosphere that had gone wrong. Rather than preparing to learn from this farm, they were mentally tearing it down. And even

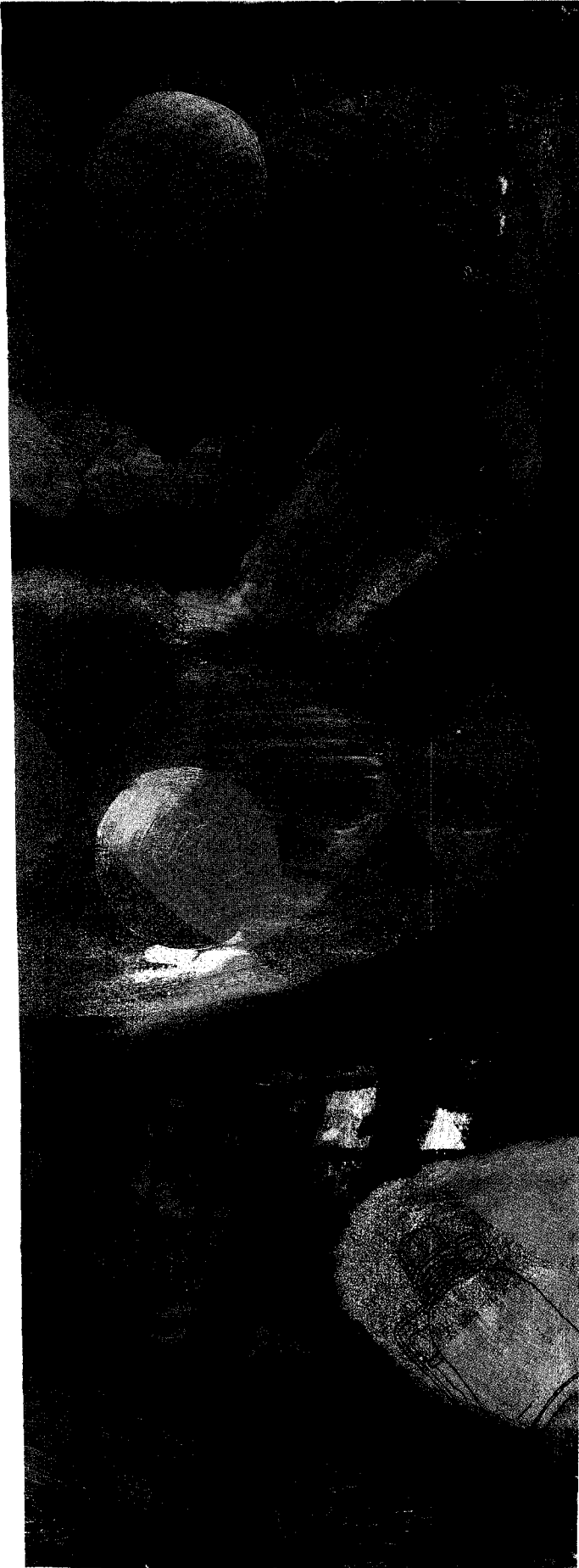
at Reñihué, beneath its beautiful calm façades, a sly resistance had sprung up. I had seen it here and there in discreet mockery of the rules, the use of boots on clean floors, the late-night whiff of marijuana, the sheen of waste oil dumped into a creek, the small, unexpected looks of defiance, as if people had been caught in a lie.

I left Reñihué in the evening, in a little boat that motored through the rain to Caleta Gonzalo. The rain stopped, and clouds broke open on a trace of dry sky. The ferry landing felt like a half step back to Chile. On a mound of landscaped ground above the concrete ramp, a tall wooden flag-

pole stood bare. I knew the story. The pole was made from the straight trunk of a tree. Tompkins had erected it as a gesture of his good will, but then the governor had forbidden him to fly the national flag there. "It's not a matter of putting our flag just anywhere," the governor had said. "There are places where the flag should not be."

I sat at the base of the flagpole and watched the coming of night. A north wind stirred the fjord, and entered the forest, and died there among the trees. The governor was, after all, a man of power. It was unlikely that Tompkins would ever leave, but over time the terms of his possession would have to change. His wealth would protect him from the need ever quite to face failure. But for the settlers who came by boat to Gonzalo and took the road to Chaitén, the flagpole, if it was still bare, would stand for the opposition to a stranger's presence. Travelers might admire the trappings of Tompkins's park. But the symbolism would be obvious to those who counted: a single perfectly shorn tree calling for a renewed assault on the forest—if not immediately, then someday. The forest might survive if other Chileans came to disagree. But it hardly mattered whether Tompkins planned it that way. ☪





Sheep

by

THOMAS H. McNEELY

“What you done, son,”
the sheriff said to
Lloyd, “separates a man from
the whole world. And
that’s why I said you need
to get right with
yourself”

BEFORE the sheriff came to get him, Lloyd found the sheep out by the pond. He’d counted head that morning and come up one short. He did the count over, because he was still hazy from the night before. And he’d waked with a foul smell in his nose. So he had gone into Mr. Mac’s house—it was early morning; the old man would be dead to the world—and filled his canteen with white lightning. He felt shaky and bad, and the spring morning was cold. He shouldn’t have gone to town the night before.

The sheep lay on its side in some rushes. A flow of yellowish mucus was coming from its nose, and its eyes were sickly thin slits that made it look afraid. Lloyd thought the sheep honorable—it had gone off to die so that it wouldn’t infect the rest of the flock. Lloyd knew that the sheep’s sickness was his fault and that he couldn’t do anything about it, but he squatted down next to the animal and rubbed its underside. In this hour before sunrise, when the night dew was still wet, the warmth and animal smell felt good. Lloyd moved his hand in circles over the sheep’s lightly furred pink skin and lines of blue veins, its hard cage of ribs, its slack, soft belly. Across the pond the sun peeked through the Pan-

handle dust over a low line of slate-gray clouds. With his free hand Lloyd took his canteen from a pocket in his jacket, clamped it between his knees, opened it, and drank. For a moment the liquor stung the sides of his tongue; then it dissolved in him like warm water. The sheep's lungs lifted up and down; its heart churned blood like a slowly pounding fist. Soon the sun broke free and the pond, rippled by a slight breeze, ignited in countless tiny candle flames. When Lloyd was a child, Mr. Mac used to tell him that at the Last Judgment the pond would become the Lake of Fire, into which all sinners would be cast. Lloyd could still picture them falling in a dark stream, God pouring them out like a bag of nails. The sheep closed its eyes against the light.

When Sheriff Lynch walked up behind him, Lloyd started. He still caressed the sheep, but it was dead and beginning to stiffen. His canteen felt almost empty; it fell from his fingers. By the sun Lloyd saw it was almost noon. Big black

vultures wheeled so high above that they looked the size of mockingbirds. Uneasiness creeping on him, Lloyd waited for the sheriff to speak.

Finally the sheriff said, "Son, looks like that sheep's dead."

"Yessir," Lloyd said, and tried to stand, but his legs were stiff and the liquor had taken his balance.

"You look about half dead yourself." The sheriff picked up Lloyd's canteen from the dry grass, sniffed it, and shook his head. "You want to turn out like Mr. Mac? A pervert?"

Lloyd wagged his head no. He thought how he must look: his long blond hair clumped in uncombed cowlicks, the dark reddish-gray circles around his eyes, his father's dirty herding jacket hanging off his broad, slumped shoulders. Sheriff Lynch stood there, his figure tall and straight. He wore a star-shaped golden badge hitched to a belt finely tooled with wildflowers. His face was burnt the rust color of Dumas County soil, the lines on it deep, like the sudden ravines into which cattle there sometimes fell. His eyes were an odd steely blue, which seemed not to be that color itself but to reflect it. He studied Lloyd.

"That probably doesn't make much of a difference now," he said, lowering his eyes as if embarrassed.

"What?" Lloyd said, though he'd heard him.

"Nothing. We just need to ask you some questions."

Lloyd wondered if Mr. Mac had found out about the sheep somehow. "But I ain't stole nothin'," he said.

"I'm fairly sure of that," the sheriff said. A grin flickered at one corner of his mouth, but it was sad and not meant to mock Lloyd. "Come on. You know the drill. Hand over your knife and shears and anything else you got."

After Lloyd put his tools in a paper bag, the sheriff squatted next to the sheep and ran his hand over its belly. His hand was large and strong and clean, though etched with red-brown creases.

WHEN they got up to the house, Lloyd saw three or four police cars parked at odd angles, as if they'd stopped in a hurry. Their lights whirled around, and dispatch radios crackled voices that no one answered. Some policemen busied themselves throwing clothes, bottles, and other junk out of Lloyd's shack, which was separated from the house by a tool shed. Others were carrying out cardboard boxes. Lloyd recognized one of the men, name of Gonzales, who'd picked him up for stealing a ten-speed when he was a kid. Lloyd waved at him and called out, but Gonzales just set his dark eyes on him for a moment and then went back to his business. Mr. Mac stood on the dirt patch in front of the house, his big sloppy body looking like it was about to fall over, talking to a man in a suit.

"If you're gonna drag that pond," he said, his eyes slits in the harsh, clear sunlight, "you're gonna have to pay me for

THE GRAIN OF SOUND

A banjo maker in the mountains,
when looking out for wood to carve
an instrument, will walk among
the trees and knock on trunks. He'll hit
the bark and listen for a note.
A hickory makes the brightest sound;
the poplar has a mellow ease.
But only straightest grain will keep
the purity of tone, the sought-
for depth that makes the licks sparkle.
A banjo has a shining shiver.
Its twangs will glitter like the light
on splashing water. But the face
of banjo is a drum of hide
of cow, or cat, or even skunk.
The hide will magnify the note,
the sad of honest pain, the chill
blood song, lament, confession, haunt,
as tree will sing again from root
and vein and sap and twig in wind
and cat will moan as hand plucks nerve,
picks bone and cell and gut and pricks
the heart as blood will answer blood
and love begins to knock along the grain.

—ROBERT MORGAN

the lost fish. I'm a poor old man. I ain't got nothin' to do with thisayre mess."

The man started to say something to him, but Mr. Mac caught sight of Lloyd. His face spread wide with a fear that Lloyd had never seen in him; then his eyes narrowed in disgust. He looked like he did when he saw ewes lamb, or when he punished Lloyd as a child.

"Mr. Mac," Lloyd said, and took a step toward him, but the old man held up his hands as if to shield his face.

"Mr. Mac," Lloyd came closer. "I 'pologize 'bout that 'er sheep. I'll work off the cost to you someway."

Mr. Mac stumbled backward and pointed at Lloyd; his face was wild and frightened again. He shouted to the man in the suit, "Look at 'im! Look at 'im! A seed of pure evil!"

Lloyd could feel his chest move ahead of his body toward Mr. Mac. He wanted to explain about the sheep, but the old man kept carrying on. The sheriff's hand, firm but kind, gripped his arm and guided him toward a police car.

The sheriff sat bolt upright on the passenger side and looked straight ahead as the rust-colored hills passed by outside. A fingerprint-smudged Plexiglas barrier ran across the top of the front seat and separated him from Lloyd. As always, the hair on the nape of the sheriff's neck looked freshly cut. Lloyd had expected them to take his shears and bowie knife, but why were they tearing up his shack? And what was Mr. Mac going on about? Still drunk, probably. He would ask the sheriff when they got to the jail. His thoughts turned to the sheep. He should've put it out of its misery—slit its throat and then cut its belly for the vultures. Not like at slaughter, when he would've had to root around with his knife and bare hands and clean out its innards. What a Godawful stink sheep's insides had! But this would've been easy. It wouldn't have taken a minute.

IN the jail two guards Lloyd didn't know sat him down inside a small white room he'd never seen before. The man in a suit who had been talking to Mr. Mac came in, with Sheriff Lynch following. Lloyd hadn't gotten to ask the sheriff what was going on. The man put what looked like a little transistor radio on the table and pressed a button and began to talk.

"Is it okay if we tape-record this interview?" he asked Lloyd.

Lloyd shrugged and smiled a who's-this-guy? smile at the sheriff. The sheriff gave him a stern, behave-yourself look.

"Sure," Lloyd said. "I ain't never been recorded before."

"Okay," the man said. He said all their names, where they were, what date and time it was. Then he opened a file folder. Lloyd didn't like his looks: he had a smile that hid itself, that laughed at you in secret. Mr. Mac could get one of those. And the man talked in one of those citified accents, maybe from Dallas.

"Okay," the man said. "My name is Thomas Blanchard. I am a special agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation. I work in the serial-homicide division." He shot his eyes up at Lloyd, as if to catch him at something. "Do you understand what that means?"

"Which part?" Lloyd said.

"Serial homicide—serial murder."

"Nope."

"It means to kill more than once—sometimes many people in a row."

"Okay," Lloyd said.

The man gave him another once-over and said, "You are being held as a material witness in seventeen murders that have occurred in and around this area. You have not been charged in any of them. Should you be charged, you will have the right to counsel, but at this time you have no such right per se. However, as a witness, should you wish to retain counsel, that is also your right. Do you wish to do so?"

Lloyd tried to put the man's words together. Blanchard bunched up his shoulders, like a squirrel ready to pounce. The sheriff leaned back his chair and studied the ceiling.

After he had drawn out the silence, Lloyd said, "I don't know. I'm still pretty drunk to think about suchlike. Would I have to pay for him?"

Blanchard's hand snaked out to the tape recorder, but the sheriff looked at Lloyd and said, "Lloyd, you think you're too drunk to know what you're sayin'? I mean, to the point of makin' things up or disrememberin'?"

"Oh, no," Lloyd said. The sheriff asked him if he was sure, and he said yes. Then the sheriff told him that to retain a lawyer he would have to pay for one. In that case, Lloyd said, he didn't want one.

"Sheriff," he said. "What's thisayre all about?"

The sheriff told him he would find out.

But he didn't, not really. Blanchard asked Lloyd about the night before. He'd gone to Genie's Too, where the old Genie's used to be. He'd brought a canteen of Mr. Mac's stuff with him for setups, because they'd lost their license. He saw all the usual people there: Candy, Huff, Wishbone, Firefly. Dwight, Genie's old man, did the colored-baby dance, flopping around this brown rag doll and flashing up its skirt. Everybody seemed to be having a real good time. Big plastic bottles were on nearly every table; people were talking—men arguing, women listening. People leaned on each other like scarecrows, some dancing slow and close, others just close, doing a little bump-and-grind.

Blanchard asked him if he had met anyone, danced with anyone. Lloyd grinned and blushed and sought out the sheriff, who smiled this time. Lloyd said, "I always been shy. I guess it's my rearing, out on that old ranch. And they got their own group there at Genie's, everybody always foolin' with everyone else's."

By the end of his answer the sheriff's smile had gone.

Blanchard asked Lloyd the same thing about ten different ways—had he seen anyone new there? The questions got on his nerves. He said, “Sheriff, now what’s this about?”

The sheriff told him to have some patience.

Blanchard asked about places in Amarillo, Lubbock, Muleshoe, Longview, Lamesa, Reno, Abilene—bars Lloyd had sneaked away to when he wanted to be alone. The ones he could remember were all about the same as Genie’s, each with its own little crowd. Blanchard mentioned places from so long ago that Lloyd began to feel as if he were asking about a different person. He drifted off into thinking about Mr. Mac.

Mr. Mac, when Lloyd would ask him where they were, used to say that all he needed to know was that they were in the United States of America. He used to tell Lloyd that where they were was just like Scotland, and then he’d start laughing to himself until his laughs trailed off into coughs. The sheriff had never, ever laughed at him like that. He didn’t have those kinds of jokes inside him.

Blanchard began asking personal questions: Did he have a girlfriend? Had he ever? No. How long had he been out at the ranch? All his life—about thirty years, according to Mr. Mac. Was he a virgin?

“Now, Sheriff, have I got to answer that?” In truth he didn’t know what he was, because, as he often reflected, he didn’t know whether what Mr. Mac had done made him not a virgin.

Perhaps sensing this, the sheriff told him no, he didn’t have to answer any more questions. In fact, it might be better to quit for the day. “I’m afraid, though, son, we’re gonna have to hold you as a suspect.”

“Suspect of what?” Lloyd said, a sweat creeping on him like the cold rain when he herded in winter.

LLOYD woke to the stink of his own sweat, and he seemed wholly that sweat and that stench—the stench was him, his soul. The overhead light had been switched on. It was a bare bulb caged by heavy wire. He glanced at the steel place he was in: steel walls, floor, ceiling, toilet, stool, table. Everything was bolted down. The steel door had a small square high window made of meshed security glass, and a slot near its bottom, with a sliding cover, for passing food. Lloyd hid his face in the crook of his arm and shook and wished he could go to Mr. Mac’s for some white lightning.

The door clanked open. Lloyd could tell it was the sheriff even though he kept his face hidden and his eyes shut tight. The sheriff put a plastic plate on the table and said, “I was afraid of this.” Then he left.

Maybe the food would help. Lloyd stood up, but his legs felt wobbly and his eyes couldn’t focus right. He lurched to the stool, planted himself on it, and held the edge of the table. When he picked up the plastic fork, it vibrated in his fingers. His touch sent a jangling electrical charge through

his arm and down his back. The harder he gripped, the more he felt as though he were trying to etch stone with a pencil, yet only this concentration made any steadiness possible. Keeping his face close to the plate, he scooped the watery scrambled eggs into his mouth. He fell to his knees and threw up in the toilet. Curled face-down on the floor, Lloyd felt a prickly, nauseous chill seep into his muscles and begin to paralyze him.

Someone not Sheriff Lynch, who seemed by his step to be burly and ill-tempered, grabbed Lloyd’s shoulder and twisted his body so that he faced the ceiling. The floor felt cold and hard against the back of his head. The man spread Lloyd’s eyelids, opened his shirt, and put a cold metal disc on his chest. Lloyd had not noticed until now, but his heart was racing—much faster than the sheep’s. That seemed so long ago. Mr. Mac was angry with him. The man started to yank down Lloyd’s pants. Lloyd moved his lips to say no! No! But his limbs and muscles had turned to cement. His mouth gaped open, but he couldn’t catch any air. The chill sweat returned. He was a boy again. Mr. Mac’s heaviness pressed the air from his lungs, pinned him from behind, faceless, pushing the dull, tearing pain into him; he choked Lloyd’s thin gasps with old-man smells of sweat and smoke and liquor and his ragged, grunting breath. The man rubbed something on Lloyd’s right buttock and then pricked it with a needle. He left without pulling up Lloyd’s pants.

Lloyd’s body softened, and the cement dissolved; a cushiony feeling spread through him, as though his limbs were swaddled in plush, warm blankets. He could breathe. He could not smell himself anymore. “Son,” he heard the sheriff say. “Put your pants on.”

The two of them sat in the little white room, this time without Blanchard.

“Sheriff.” Lloyd’s words seemed to float out of his mouth. “Sheriff, what’s all thisayre ‘bout?”

Sheriff Lynch sat across the table. His face changed faintly as animals and unknown faces, and then the spirits of Mr. Mac and Blanchard, passed through it. He popped a peppermint Life Saver, sucked on it hard, and pulled back into focus.

“Let me ask you a question first, son, and then I’ll answer yours.” He reached down next to his chair and put two Ziploc bags with Lloyd’s shears and bowie knife in them on the table. Both the shears and the knife were tagged, as if they were in hock. The sheriff pressed them a few times with the tips of his long rust-colored fingers, lightly, as though to make sure they were there, or to remind them to stay still. “Now,” he said, “I think I already know the answer to this question, but I need to know from you.” He pressed them again. “Are these your knife and shears?”

How should he answer? The sheriff leaned back, waiting, with a look on his face that said he didn’t want to hear the answer.

“Maybe,” Lloyd said.

"Maybe." The sheriff joined his hands behind his head and pointed his eyes up and away, as though he were considering this as a possible truth.

"Maybe," Lloyd said.

"Lloyd Wayne Dogget," the sheriff said, turning his not-blue eyes on him. "How long have I known you? I knew your daddy and your grandpappy when they were alive. I know more about you than you know about you. And you ain't never been able to lie to me and get clear with it. So I'll ask you again—are these your knife and shears?"

Mr. Mac had given Lloyd the shears when he was sixteen. They were long and silvery. At the end of each day of shearing, after cutting the sheep's coarse, billowy hair, Lloyd would sharpen them on a strop and oil them with a can of S'OK to keep off the rust. The merry old man on the green can, a pipe in his mouth, always reminded him of Mr. Mac.

"What if I say yes?" Lloyd said.

Sheriff Lynch sucked on the Life Saver and blew out a breath. He leaned close to Lloyd and put his elbows on the table. "To tell you the truth," he said, "it doesn't make a whit's difference." He pressed the plastic bags again. "There's blood on these tools matches the type of a young lady people saw you leave Genie's with, a young lady who turned up murdered. And I confiscated these two things from you. So it doesn't make a whit's difference what you say, whether you lie or not. I'm just trying to give you a chance to get right with yourself, to be a man." He sank back and ran his hands through his stubbly iron-gray hair as he bowed his head and looked at the bags. He massaged his clean-cut neck. "Maybe to get right with the Lord, too. I don't know. I don't believe in that kind of thing, but sometimes it helps people."

To Lloyd, the sheriff seemed embarrassed about something. Lloyd wanted to help him. But he was also afraid; he could not remember any young lady, only smiling dark-red lips, the curve of a bare upper arm, honky-tonk music, Dwight flinging the colored baby doll around.

"Okay, Sheriff," he said. "Since it don't make any difference, you know they're mine."

The sheriff escorted him to the showers, where he took Lloyd's clothes and gave him an inmate's orange jumpsuit and a pair of regulation flip-flops. After Lloyd had showered and changed, the sheriff told him he was under arrest for capital murder, read him his rights, and handcuffed him. They got in his car, Lloyd riding in the front seat, and drove the two blocks to the courthouse. The judge asked him if he had any money or expected any help, and he said no, which was the truth.

EVERY morning Sheriff Lynch came to Lloyd's cell and walked with him down to the little white room, where Lloyd talked with his lawyer. When the sheriff opened the door to the room, Lloyd watched his lawyer and the sheriff volley looks under their pleasantries. He remembered a

cartoon he'd seen: Bluto and Popeye had each grabbed one of Olive Oyl's rubbery arms. They were stretching her like taffy. He couldn't remember how it ended.

Raoul Schwartz, the lawyer Lloyd had been assigned, said the judge had granted Lloyd a competency hearing, but not much money to do it with. He, Schwartz, would have to conduct the tests himself and then send them to a psychiatrist for evaluation. In two months the psychiatrist would testify and the judge would decide whether Lloyd was competent to stand trial. Schwartz said they had a lot of work to do. Schwartz said he was there to help.

Schwartz was everything the sheriff was not. He had short, pale, womanish fingers that fluttered through papers, fiddled with pencils, took off his wire-rimmed granny glasses and rubbed the bridge of his nose. When he got impatient, which was often, his fingers scratched at a bald spot on the top of his forehead. Lloyd thought he might have rubbed his hair off this way.

Schwartz wouldn't let him wriggle out of questions, sometimes asking the same ones many times, like Blanchard. He asked about Lloyd's whole life. Sometimes the glare of the white room and Schwartz's drone were like being in school again, and Lloyd would lay his head down on the slick-topped table between them and put his cheek to its cool surface. "Come on, Lloyd," Schwartz would say. "We've got work to do."

Also unlike the sheriff, Schwartz cursed, which was something Lloyd could never abide, and the little man's Yankee accent raked the words across Lloyd's nerves even worse than usual. When Lloyd told him that Sheriff Lynch had been out to talk to Mr. Mac after a teacher had spotted cigarette burns on his arms, Schwartz murmured, "Excellent, excellent. Fucking bastard."

"Who's the effing bastard?"

"Mr. Mac." Schwartz's head popped up just as Blanchard's had when he'd wanted to catch Lloyd at something, only this time it was Lloyd who had caught Schwartz in a lie.

Schwartz began giving Lloyd tests. Lloyd was worried that he might fail them, but he didn't say anything; he had already gotten the impression that this man thought he was stupid. But it was the tests that were stupid. First Schwartz asked him about a million yes-or-no questions. Everything from "Do you think your life isn't worth living?" (no) to "Do you ever see things that aren't there?" (sometimes, in the woods). Then came the pictures. One showed a man and a boy standing in opposite corners of a room. At first Lloyd just said what he saw. But this wasn't good enough; Schwartz said he had to interpret it. "Tell me what you think is going to happen next," he said. When Lloyd looked at it closely, he figured the boy had done something wrong and was about to get a good belt-whipping. Schwartz seemed pleased by this. Finally, and strangest of all, Schwartz showed him some blobs of ink and asked him to make something out of them. If Schwartz hadn't

been so serious, Lloyd would have thought it was a joke. But when he studied them (Schwartz had used that word—"interpret"—again), Lloyd could see all different kinds of faces and animals, as he had when he'd talked to Sheriff Lynch about his knife and shears.

It took only one little thing to tell him what the sheriff thought about this testing.

One morning the sheriff walked Lloyd down the hallway without a word, and when he unlocked the door to the white room, he stepped back, held it open, and swooped his hand in front of Lloyd like a colored doorman.

"Mr. Dogget," he said, for the first time making fun of Lloyd in some secret way.

The sheriff turned and let the door close without so much as a glance at Schwartz. Lloyd wanted to apologize to the sheriff. He was beginning to understand that it came down to this: the worse the sheriff looked, the better he, Lloyd, looked. He felt he was betraying the sheriff, with the help of this strange, foul-mouthed little man. Schwartz seemed to see everything upside down. When Lloyd had told him about Mr. Mac, even though Schwartz said it must have been awful, Lloyd could tell that in some way he was pleased. When he told Schwartz about times when a lot of hours passed without his knowing it, like when he'd sat with that sheep, or about drinking at least a canteen of Mr. Mac's white lightning every day for the past few years, Schwartz began scribbling and shooting questions at him. Same thing with the pills and reefer and acid and speed he'd done in his twenties. Even the gas huffing when he was just a kid. Lloyd felt dirty remembering all of it. Schwartz wanted details. Lloyd could almost see Schwartz making designs out of what he told him, rearranging things to make him look pitiful.

"I don't want to do no testin' today," Lloyd said as soon as the door had shut. He sat and leaned back in his chair, arms dangling, chest out.

"Okay," Schwartz said. "What do you want to do?"

"I been thinkin'," Lloyd said. "It don't make no difference if I was drunk or not. That don't excuse what I did."

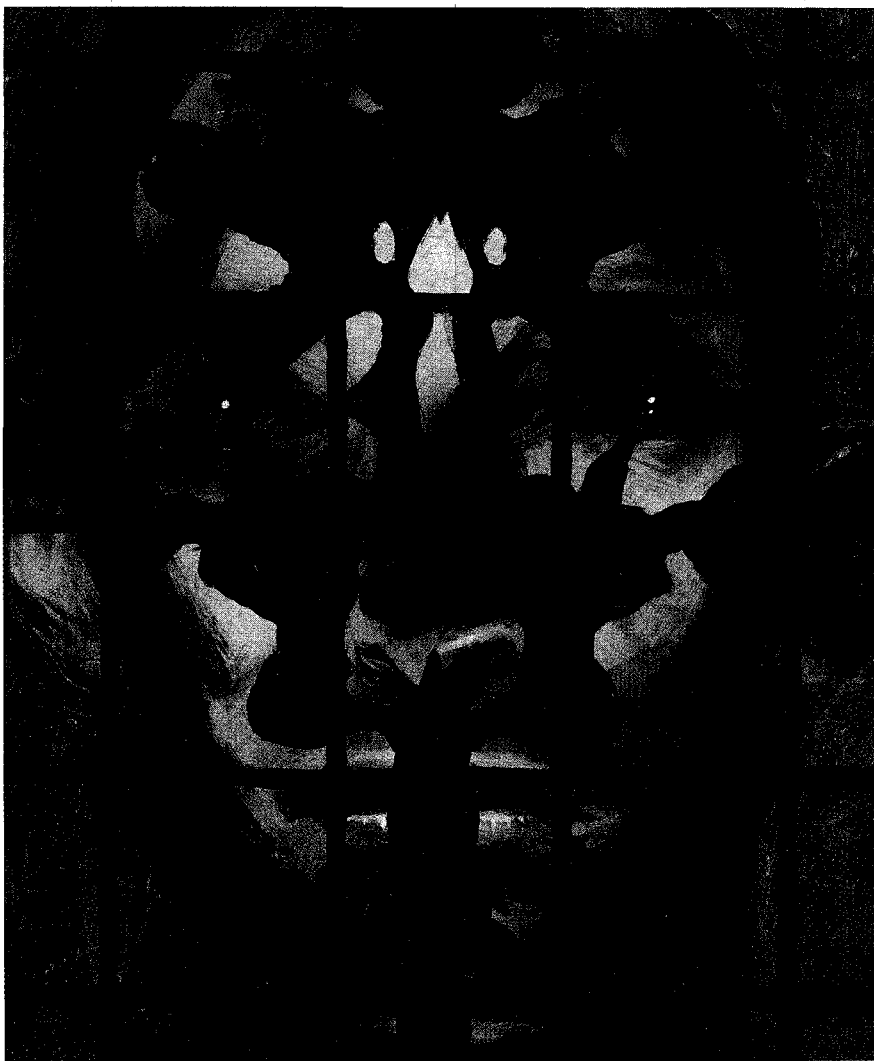
"But you don't know what you did."

"That don't make no difference. They got the proof."

"They have evidence, Lloyd, not proof."

Another bunch of upside-down words. "But if I can't remember it, then ain't what they got better than what I can say?"

"Lloyd," Schwartz said, his head in his hands, massaging his bald spot. "We've been over this about every time we've talked. I know that it doesn't make common sense at first. But our criminal-justice system—that misnomer—is predicated upon the idea of volition. It means you have to commit a crime with at least an inkling of intention. You can't be punished in the same way when you don't have any idea what you're doing."



This kind of talk made Lloyd's head ache. "All I know," he said, "is I don't want to go foolin' around with truth. It's like the sheriff says—I got to get right with myself and be a man."

"The sheriff says this?" Schwartz's head popped up.

Lloyd nodded.

"Do you talk to the sheriff often?"

"I been knowing Sheriff Lynch since forever. He's like my daddy."

"But do you talk to him? How often do you talk to him?"

"Every chance I get." Lloyd felt queasy. He knew he'd said something he shouldn't have. But his pride in his friend-

ship with the sheriff, perhaps because it was imperiled, drove him to exaggerate. "When we come from my cell, mostly. But any time I want, really. I can call on him any time."

"I don't think it's a good idea for you to be talking to him about your case," Schwartz said.

"And why not?"

"Because anything—*anything*—you say to him becomes evidence. As a matter of fact, I don't think it's a good idea for you to talk to him at all."

"So who'm I gonna talk to? Myself? You?"

FOR the next couple of days the sheriff didn't speak to Lloyd unless Lloyd spoke to him first. Schwartz must have done something. But the sheriff never looked at him hard or seemed angry. He mainly kept his words short and his eyes on the floor, as if he was sad and used to his sadness. Lloyd wanted to tell him how he was trying to get right but it was hard. Eventually Lloyd realized that even if he said this, the sheriff probably wouldn't believe him. If he were trying to get right, then he wouldn't be letting this Schwartz character make him look pitiful. Each morning Lloyd rose early, dressed, and rubbed his palms to dry them as he sat on the edge of his bunk, waiting. When he walked in front of the sheriff down the hallway to the white room, Lloyd could feel the sheriff's eyes taking him in. He tried to stand up straight and walk with manly strides, but the harder he tried, the smaller and more bent over he felt. He was careful not to wrinkle his prison outfit, pressing it at night between his mattress and a piece of plywood the sheriff had given him for his back. He combed his hair as best he could without a mirror.

At night Lloyd lay on his bunk and thought about Schwartz. Of course, Schwartz had tricked him into more tests. Next they were going to take pictures of his brain. Lloyd studied Schwartz's words: "volition," "interpret," "diminished responsibility." They all meant you couldn't be punished for your mistakes. This didn't square with Lloyd; he had been punished for plenty of mistakes. That was what Mr. Mac had punished him for; that was what the sheep died of. When you missed one on a head count and it got lost and fell into a ravine; when you forgot to give one a vaccination and it got sick, like the one that had died before Lloyd was taken away, you were punished. But how could he expect Schwartz, a womanish city boy, to understand this?

On one side were Schwartz and the law, and on the other were the sheep and God and the earth and Sheriff Lynch and Mr. Mac and everything else Lloyd had ever known. Who was he to go against all that—to hide from that terrible, swift sword the Almighty would wield on the Final Day? His fear was weak and mortal; it drove him out of his cell to plot with this fellow sinner to deceive God. Some nights Lloyd moaned in agony at the deceit of his life. For in his pride he had

latched onto the notion that since he could not remember his gravest sins (and he believed they were all true, they must be true), he should not have to pay for them in this life. Oh, he would pay for them in eternity, but he flinched at paying here. What upside-down thinking! What cowardice in the face of sins that were probably darker, cloaked as they were in his drunken forgetting, than any he could have committed when he had "volition," as Schwartz called it. Because Lloyd did not know his sins, he could not accept his punishment; but for the same reason they seemed to him unspeakably heinous.

LLOYD lay on his bunk in the darkness and thought about the pictures he had seen of his brain. Two officers he didn't know had driven him to a hospital in Lubbock to get them taken. The hearing was in a week. Schwartz had pointed out patches in the pictures' rainbow colors, scratching his bald spot and pacing. He'd said that although parts of Lloyd's brain were damaged so that alcohol could cause longer and more severe blackouts in him than in normal people, such damage might not be enough for the court to recognize him as incompetent. And the rest of the tests had proved that he had a dissociative condition but not multiple-personality disorder. Lloyd had wanted to ask if Schwartz thought he was incompetent, but he figured he wouldn't get a straight answer.

In the darkness of the steel room Lloyd touched his head, trying to feel the colored patches of heat and coolness that the pictures showed in his brain. He imagined he could sense some here and there. He had come a long way—not many people knew what their brains looked like. But the thought that he might be incompetent frightened him. What if some day one of those big machines they put over his head was put over his chest and a picture was taken of his soul? What would it look like? He saw a dark-winged creature with tearing claws, cloaked in a gray mist.

The knock came to Lloyd in a half dream, and at first he thought he had imagined the sheriff's voice. The whole jail was quiet; all the inmates were covered in the same darkness.

"Lloyd? Lloyd? You awake, son?" The voice didn't sound exactly like the sheriff's, but Lloyd knew that's who it was. He rose and went to the door, too sleepy to be nervous. He peered out the square window. The glare of the hallway made him squint. The sheriff stood in silhouette, but his steely eyes glinted. Looking at him through the crosshatches of wire in the security glass, Lloyd thought that he, too, looked caged.

"I'm awake, Sheriff."

The door opened, and the sheriff said, "Come on." Lloyd could smell whiskey. He followed the sheriff out past the booking area. Everything was still and deserted in the bare fluorescent light. Gonzales dozed in a chair at the front desk with a porno magazine in his lap. The sheriff opened the door to his office, making the same mocking gesture as be-

fore, though this time he seemed to be trying to share his joke with Lloyd. He snapped the door's lock and sat down behind his desk. A single shaded lamp glowed in a corner, casting shadows from the piles of paper on the desk and reflecting golden patches from plaques on the walls.

The sheriff pointed at a low-backed leather chair and told Lloyd to have a seat. "Excuse me gettin' you out of bed, son. I figured this was the only time we could talk."

"It's no trouble."

"You can prob'ly tell I been drinkin'," the sheriff said. "I don't do it as a habit, but I apologize for that, too. I been doin' it more lately. I do it when I'm sick at heart. At least that's my excuse to myself, which is a Goddamned poor one, unbefitting a man, if you ask me. But I am. Sick at heart."

He took a long pull from a coffee mug. Lloyd followed it with his eyes, and the sheriff caught him.

"And no," he said, "you can't have any. One of us got to stay sober, and I want you to remember what I'm gonna tell you." He leaned across the desk. "You know what a vacuum is, son? I mean in a pure sense, not the one you clean with."

Lloyd shook his head.

"Well. A vacuum is a place where there ain't anything, not even air. Every light bulb"—the sheriff nodded at the lamp behind him—"is a vacuum. Space is mostly vacuum. Vacuum tubes used to be in radios. And so on. A place where there ain't nothin'. Is that signifyin' for you?"

Lloyd nodded.

"Good. So we, because we're on this earth with air to breathe, we are in a place that's not a vacuum that's in the middle of a vacuum, which is space. Think of a bubble floatin' out in the air." The sheriff made a big circle above the desk with his fingertips. "That's what the earth is like, floatin' in space. Are you followin' me?"

"I think so."

"Well, are you or aren't you?" the sheriff said with sudden violence. Not waiting for an answer, he yanked open his desk drawer and took out a large folding map of the world. He tumbled it down the front of his desk, weighted its top corners with a tape dispenser and a stapler, and came around the desk to stand next to Lloyd. He told Lloyd what it was and said, "I study this all the time. Do you know where we are right now?"

To Lloyd, the shapes on the map looked like those ink-blots. By reading, he found the United States and then Texas, and then he gave up. He shrugged his shoulders. "I don't know, Sheriff."

"That's okay," the sheriff said gently. He pointed to a dot in the Panhandle which someone had drawn with a ballpoint pen. Cursive letters next to it said "Dumas." "This is where we are. Two specks within that dot, on the dark side of the earth, floating in space. Over here"—he pointed to Hong Kong—"it's lunchtime. Japs eatin' their noodles or whatever. Here"—he pointed to London—"people just risin', eatin' their sausages and egg sandwiches."

He stepped back, behind Lloyd, and put his hands on the chair. The heat of his body and the smell of his breath washed over Lloyd.

"But look, son," the sheriff said, "how many places there are. It's some time everywhere, and everybody is doin' something."

The sheriff stood there for a few moments. Lloyd felt as he had when he was a child watching TV—he couldn't imagine how all those people got inside that little box. Now he couldn't fathom people inside the little dots. The world was vast and stranger than he had ever imagined.

"We are all here doin' things," the sheriff said, "inside this bubble that is not a vacuum. We all breathe the same air, and everything we do nudges everything else." He stepped over and propped himself on the edge of his desk, next to the map, and crossed his legs. The lamp's soft light cast him in half shadow.

"And this is why I'm sick at heart. Because I thought I knew you. Separation is the most terrible thing there is, especially for a man like me." The sheriff gestured to take in the whole room. "This is what I got. It ain't much. You and I aren't that far apart, son. Both of us solitary. But what you done, son, and I do believe you did all that, that separates a man from the whole world. And that's why I said you need to get right with yourself."

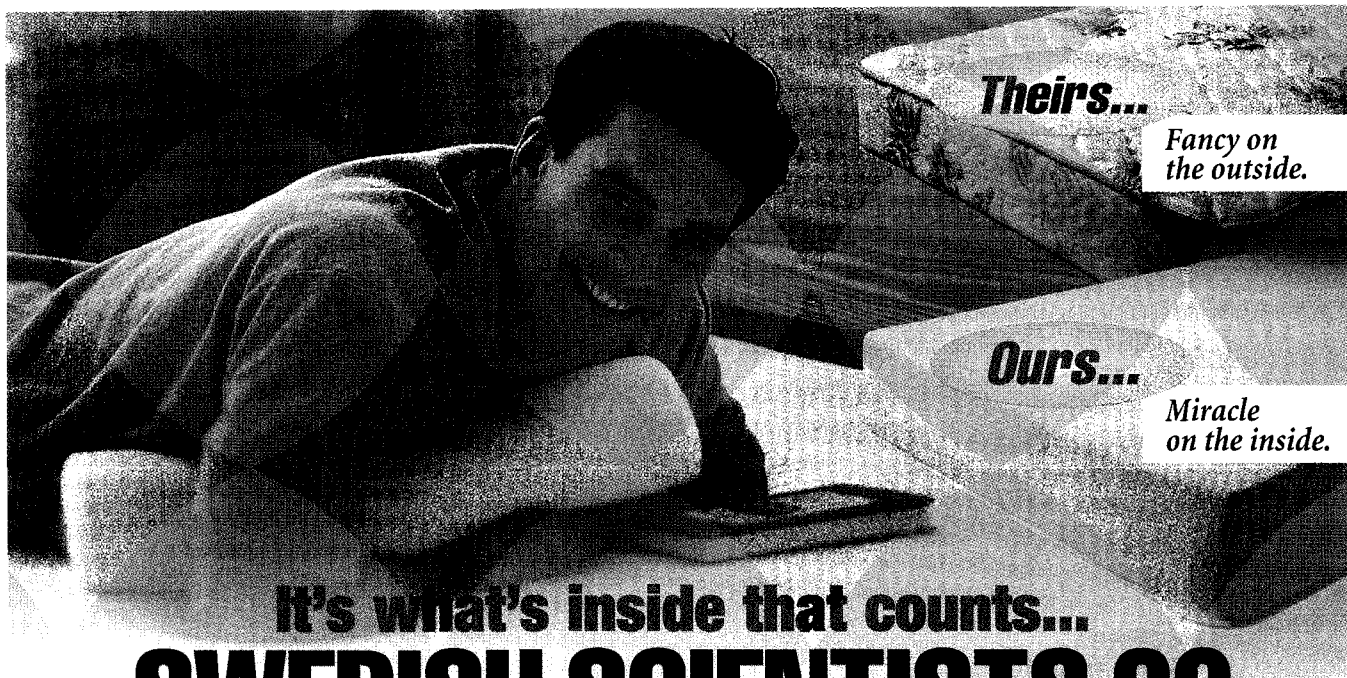
Lloyd bowed his head.

"You don't need to tell me you ain't done that." The sheriff's voice rose and quickened, began to quiver. "You and I both know you ain't. But that itself—a negativity, a vacuum—ain't nothin' to breathe in. Things die without air. So what I'm askin' you is, I want to do my own competency exam, for my own self. This is between Lloyd Wayne Dogget and Archibald Alexander Lynch. I need to know what's inside you to know what's inside myself. So you tell that lawyer of yours I'll stipulate to whatever he wants. Remember that word—'stipulate.' Now get out a' here." He turned from Lloyd and began folding the map with shaking hands. The corner weighted by the tape dispenser tore. Lloyd could not move.

"Shit," the sheriff muttered. He wheeled unsteadily on Lloyd, his eyes wide with panic and surprise at what he'd said. Lloyd could tell he was afraid, but not of him, as Mr. Mac had been. The sheriff was afraid that he might show his own soul to Lloyd and so break out of the bubble in which he lived. "Git!" he yelled. "Go tell Gonzales to take you back! Get outta here before I say somethin' foolish!"

HE wants you to do *what*?" Schwartz paced in the little white room, looking at the floor.

Lloyd was sitting at the table, turning his head to follow Schwartz. Was Schwartz right with himself? He repeated what the sheriff had told him.



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"What does that son of a bitch want?" Schwartz said to himself.

"I wish you'd stop cussing around me."

Schwartz made a distracted noise.

"I mean it," Lloyd said. "It's offensive."

Schwartz made another noise. He had gathered his lips together into a pucker with his fingers, and he looked at the floor as he paced.

"Especially cussing on the sheriff." When Schwartz didn't answer, Lloyd said, "Are you hearing me? Don't cuss on the sheriff."

"I don't know what kind of game he's trying to play." Schwartz did not stop or raise his eyes from the floor. "But I would guess he's trying to trick some kind of confession out of you."

"Sheriff don't play no games with me," Lloyd said. "He don't have no tricks. You're the one with all the tricks."

"I'll take that as a compliment."

"Sheriff's the one tryin' to help me get right."

"Sheriff's the one tryin' to help you get dead," Schwartz said, mimicking Lloyd.

"Okay, man." Lloyd stood up and pushed his chair away. It squealed on the floor, and Schwartz stopped. Lloyd saw that his own fists were clenched. He hesitated.

"What are you gonna do, Lloyd? Beat me up? Go ahead. I've been expecting this."

"You think I'm stupid," Lloyd said. "And all them tests is to make me look pitiful and incompetent. What do you think that's done to my trying to get right?"

"What do you think that means, Lloyd—'getting right'?" Schwartz moved close to him. He stared straight at Lloyd as he spoke. "It means giving up."

That night, and for the days and nights to come, Lloyd turned over in his mind all he had seen and heard. What he had known before was like some foreign language that now he couldn't understand. The worlds of Schwartz and the sheriff, of man and God, of what was in the law and what was in the fields, began to blur, and yet between them grew a chasm in which he hung suspended. He tried to remember what had happened in the places Blanchard had said he'd been, but he couldn't. He could not make them connect the way the sheriff had said all the people in all those dots on the map did. An indifference grew around him, a thin glass glazing that separated him from the rest of humankind.

THE sheriff led him down the hallway to the white room without a word or a look, and left him with Schwartz. The hearing was the next day. Lloyd felt as though he were about to take another test. He had fought with Schwartz tooth and nail over the sheriff's proposal, and in the end had gotten his way by threatening to fire him. After Lloyd sat down across the table from him, Schwartz ex-

plained that he and the sheriff had struck a deal: the sheriff had agreed that he would not testify about his "competency exam," as he called it, on the condition that he not have to reveal to Schwartz beforehand what it was going to be about.

"I don't like this," Schwartz said, pacing, clicking the top of a ballpoint pen so that it made a *tick-tick* sound, like a clock. He sat down again, his elbows on the table and his hands joined as though in prayer, and brought his face close to Lloyd's.

"I want to tell you the truest thing I've ever seen, Lloyd. I've seen a man executed. When you are executed in Texas, you are taken to a powder-blue room. This is the death chamber, where the warden, a physician, and a minister will stand around the gurney. Since executions can take place in Texas only between midnight and dawn, it will have that eerie feeling of a room brightly lit in the middle of the night. Before this, in an anteroom, a guard will tell you to drop your pants. Then he will insert one rubber stopper in your penis and another in your anus, to prevent you from urinating and defecating when your muscles relax after you have died. When you are lying on the gurney, the guard will secure your arms, legs, and chest to it with leather straps. The guard will insert a needle, which is attached to an IV bag, into your left arm. Above you will be fluorescent lighting, and a microphone will hang suspended from the ceiling. The warden—I think it's still Warden Pearson—will ask whether you have any last words. When you're finished, three chemicals will be released into your blood: sodium thiopental, a sedative that is supposed to render you unconscious; pancuronium bromide, a muscle relaxant, to collapse your diaphragm and lungs; potassium chloride, a poison that will stop your heart.

"I could tell that my client could feel the poison entering his veins. I had known him for the last three of his fifteen years on death row; he was old enough to be my father. At his execution I was separated from him by a piece of meshed security glass. There was nothing I could do when he began writhing and gasping for breath. The poison—later I found out it was the potassium chloride, to stop his heart—had been injected before the thiopental. Imagine a dream in which your body has turned to lead, in which you can't move and are sinking in water. You have the sensations given you by your nerves and understood in your brain, but you can't do anything about them. You struggle against your own body. But really, it is unimaginable—what it is like to try to rouse your own heart.

"What if everything goes as planned? A nice, sleepy feeling—the sedative tricking your nerves—will dissolve your fear. The question is, will you want it taken away, fear being the only thing that binds you to life? Will you want to hold on to that, like the survivor of a shipwreck clinging to a barnacled plank? Will you struggle, in the end, to be afraid?"

SCHWARTZ slumped back in his chair and began again to *tick-tick* the top of his pen so that it made a sound like a clock. The whiteness and silence of the room seemed to annihilate time, as though the two men could sit there waiting forever. They fell on Lloyd like a thin silting of powdered glass.

"You spend a lot of time thinkin' about that, don't you?" Lloyd said.

"Yes."

"You told me that to scare me, didn't you?"

"Yes."

Lloyd thought that Schwartz might have gotten right with himself, in his own way, by seeing what he had seen and thinking on it. But something still didn't add up.

"How do you know I'd be afraid?" Lloyd said. "How do you know that would be the last thing I'd feel?"

"I don't know that." Schwartz *tick-ticked* the pen. "You can never know. That's what's terrible about death."

"Lots of things you don't know when you're alive. So what's the difference?"

Schwartz's fingers stopped, and he stared at Lloyd as though he had seen him purely and for the first time. A knock at the door broke the brief, still moment, and Sheriff Lynch entered. He carried under his arm a stack of manila folders, which he put down on the table. Schwartz rose, studying Lloyd. He shook the sheriff's hand when it was offered. His eyes, though, were fixed on Lloyd. The sheriff caught this, but smiled pleasantly and told Schwartz it was good to see him again.

"Lloyd," he said, and nodded at him. He lifted a chair from the corner, put it at the head of the table, and sat.

"I think I need a little more time to consult with my client," Schwartz said.

The sheriff pressed his fingers a few times on top of the folders. "Okay. How much time do you think you'll need?"

"We don't need no more time," Lloyd said, rocking back and forth in his chair. "I'm ready."

"I'd like to look at what you've got there first."

"But that wasn't the agreement, Mr. Schwartz."

"Come on," Lloyd said. "I'm ready."

"Why don't you listen to your client?"

Looking from Lloyd to the sheriff, Schwartz paled. He seemed pinned in place for a moment; then he took off his glasses and rubbed them on his shirt. He put them on again. Sheriff Lynch stared at the stack of folders, his fingertips resting on them like a pianist's, his expression one of patient indulgence toward a child who was finishing a noisy tantrum. Lloyd clenched his hands between his thighs, wondering what would be revealed to him.

"Do you mind if I stand?" Schwartz said.

"Go right ahead." Sheriff Lynch pressed his fingers again to the top folder, as if for luck or in valediction, took it from the stack, and opened it in front of Lloyd. Lloyd did not see

at first what was there, because Schwartz had made a sudden movement toward the table, but Sheriff Lynch, with the slightest warning lift of his hand, checked him. He faced Schwartz a moment and then turned to Lloyd.

"Go ahead, son," he said. "Tell me what you see."

When Lloyd looked down, he was disappointed. It was another one of those crazy tests. He saw shapes of red and pink and green and black. It was the inkblot test, only in color. He studied more closely to try and make sense of it. He realized it was a picture of something. He realized what it was.

"I think I got it," he said to the sheriff. The sheriff nodded to help him along. "It's a sheep," Lloyd said.

"Look at it a little more closely, son." Lloyd saw Schwartz again move and the sheriff again check him while keeping his neutral blue eyes on Lloyd. Lloyd went back to the picture. He had missed some details.

"It's a sheep gutted after slaughter," he said.

"Turn the picture over, son," the sheriff said. This time Schwartz did not move and the sheriff did not hold up his hand. Paper-clipped to the back of the picture Lloyd found a smaller photo of a young woman. She had straight brown hair, wore blue jeans and a red-and-white checkered blouse, and sat in a lawn chair, smiling to please the person who held the camera.

"Now turn the picture over again," the sheriff said, in his calm, steady voice. "What do you see?"

Lloyd tried to puzzle it out, but he couldn't. There must be something he wasn't seeing. He studied the picture. As he followed the shapes and colors of the sheep's emptied body, a trickle of pity formed in him for all three of them—the woman, the sheep, and himself—and dropped somewhere inside him. The glaze over him tightened. He could only tell the sheriff that he saw a sheep.

After the sheriff left, gathering the folders under his arm, the room went back to its silence.

"If I'd known," Schwartz said, "I would've had him testify."

"What?" Lloyd said. "If you'd known what?"

"Never mind." Shielding his face with his pale fingers, Schwartz laid his other hand on Lloyd's shoulder. "Never mind, Lloyd. You're perfect the way you are."

They had sat there a long time, the sheriff opening a folder in front of him, asking him the same questions, and then putting it aside. And in each folder Lloyd had seen the same things: a gutted sheep and a pretty young woman. He knew that the sheriff was trying to do something to help him get right, but as the glaze thickened, that chance seemed ever more remote. Before he left, the sheriff had nodded to Lloyd, to acknowledge that he had found his answer, but his gesture was as distant as that of a receding figure waving a ship out to sea. With each drop of pity Lloyd felt himself borne away yet drowning, so that he knew the heart of the man in the execution chamber, suffocating and unable to move, and he wondered how he would survive in this new and airless world. ♣



Politically Correct Planting

*When gardening becomes a crusade,
it's time to pause and take stock*

MONTHS before the crocuses peep through the snow or the barn swallows chatter about their return from points south, there are signs aplenty of impending spring for those who know where to look on the small farm in Virginia where I live. None are so ominous, however, as the trays in the refrigerator. Long before the final frost they begin to appear—a few at first, and then an invading army that settles in for an extended siege.

Filled with potting soil and scores of practically invisible seeds, they are the seasonal harbingers of what I have come to think of as The Project—my wife's efforts to turn 3,600 square feet of dirt into a garden of native perennials.

Thirty-six hundred square feet is about a twelfth of an acre, a laughably small patch of ground by the agricultural yardstick of our neighborhood. But it is alarm-

ing just how many plants it takes to fill a plot that size, and all the more so when the seeds of the plants in question must live in one's refrigerator for two months before they will germinate. (Just a few, mercifully, require an additional sojourn in the freezer compartment.) This has been going on for years now, and there is no end in sight.

We decided to concentrate on native plants and those cultivated in America

before 1800, for no particular reason that I can remem-

ber now other than that it seemed in keeping with Alexander Pope's famous gardening exhortation to "consult the genius of the place." Our place includes, if not much evident genius, at least a log cabin and a rolling pasture secure for the moment against the advancing tide of townhouses. Although the tinge of nostalgia in our choice was undeniable, wildflowers and other native plants did

seem more in keeping with the surroundings—and also less fussy once past the refrigerator stage of their lives—than gaudier and more temperamental garden standards such as roses and peonies, imports from distant shores.

Many of the native plants that now flank the oystershell walks of our square garden are pretty and elegant things, fully justifying their frequent description in the reference books as "unjustifiably neglected." A favorite of mine is *Amsonia tabernaemontana*, also known as blue star, which with its small clusters of steel-blue flowers has what one of these books calls an "understated grace." A tendency toward the exotic and showy has long dominated the American flower-breeding scene, and there is certainly nothing understated about the names given to conventional flower varieties. "Olympic Fire," "Hot Lips," and "Boy O' Boy" are a few of the tamer ones. Amsonia, on the other hand, this book goes on to observe, "certainly . . . will never be called 'Mae West.'"

Another native perennial I have come to know and love for its simple elegance is *Baptisia alba*, white false indigo, which puts out a fine chain of white wisteria-like blooms against a deep-purple stem. A member of the legume family, it forms pealike seed pods that last until fall, a homey touch in the perennial border.

ONCE we had made what was at the time a rather casual, even naive, decision to grow only native and traditional plants in our ornamental garden, one thing quickly led to another. Starting from seed proved to be largely a matter of necessity. Many native plants are simply not part of the nursery trade: it's seeds or nothing. And when tiny bare-root plants or cuttings were available, through mail-order suppliers that specialize in native plants, prices often seemed prohibitive.

The short shrift given local species is an old story and an odd one, and I can understand why native-plant enthusiasts tend to feel so strongly about their enthusiasm. They must fight a battle not only against what the textbooks call the "complex dormancy systems" of many

of these species (hence the refrigerator sessions) but also against indifference, neglect, and even a want of proper patriotic feeling. In 1851 one American horticulturist wrote,

Nothing strikes foreign horticulturists and amateurs so much as this apathy and indifference of Americans to the beautiful sylvan and floral products of their own country. An enthusiastic collector in Belgium first made us keenly sensible of this condition of our countrymen last summer, in describing the difficulty he had in procuring from any of his correspondents here, American seeds or plants. . . . "In a country of azaleas, kalmias, rhododendrons, cyripediums, magnolias and nyssas [he wrote]—the loveliest flowers, shrubs, and trees of temperate climates—you never put them in your gardens, but send over the water every year for thousands of dollars worth of English larches and Dutch hyacinths. Voilà le goût Républicain!"

I was prepared for the whiff of chauvinism, even xenophobia, that hovers around those who take up the cause of native species; I was aware, too, that a sort of reverse snobbery has long been attached to the cultivation of understated flowers, and growing only native understated flowers could seem too refined for words.

What I was not prepared for was the discovery that in dutifully hauling cartloads of muck and mulch each spring and acquiescing in the de facto annexation of my refrigerator each winter, I had become a marcher in a moral crusade to save the planet. This disconcerting fact came to my attention recently when I picked up a copy of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden's Handbook #157, "Starting From Seed." There is not a lot about starting from seed in this pamphlet. What there is a lot about is repairing the tattered fabric of local ecosystems, resisting the hegemony of "a handful of multinational corporations" and "agrichemical conglomerates," protecting the world's "ir-

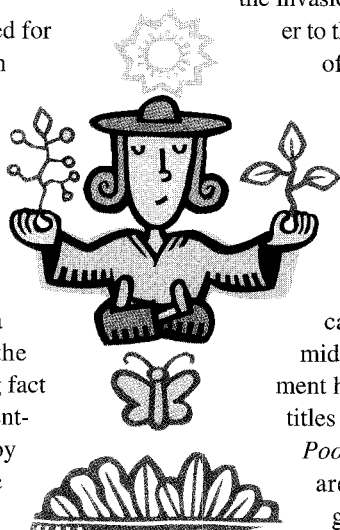
replaceable genetic wealth," and, yes, preserving "Spaceship Earth."

In retrospect, there were warning signs that this was coming. I have subscribed to the Brooklyn Botanic Garden's handbook series for a number of years, and looking back can trace a steady evolution from nuts and bolts to the Meaning of It All. The series used to be called the Brooklyn Botanic Garden Record, and it was notable for its small type and many pages of raw data cataloguing various plants and describing their soil and cultivation requirements. But at a certain point it shed its fusty title in favor of the "21st-Century Gardening Series" (several years early); the type started getting bigger, and the word "diversity" started appearing with increasing frequency. Articles from the BBG began frowning on lawns and clipped hedges and warning that unnatural intrusions on the landscape such as herbs and vegetables had best be confined to the immediate vicinity of the house, where they presumably can be kept under close observation for any signs of threatening the biodiversity of the planet. Farther away from the house we are advised to "increase the degree of wildness" and "release" existing plant communities from "the grip of alien shrubs and vines." One special issue of the 21st-Century Gardening Series was devoted to combating the invasion of alien species, another to the complementary virtues

of native plants. Most recently came "Starting From Seed," which in places seems more a sort of New Age spiritual guide than a gardening handbook.

There are other indications that we are in the midst of a full-blown movement here. Weighty books with titles like *Gardening the Gene Pool in Your Own Backyard* are appearing. Organized groups with names like Seed Savers Exchange

and Flower & Herb Exchange are rising up with the avowed aim of preserving "heirloom" varieties and challenging the hegemony of the seed companies. The seed giant W. Atlee Burpee is apparently worried enough by all this that it has countered with its "Burpee Heirlooms"



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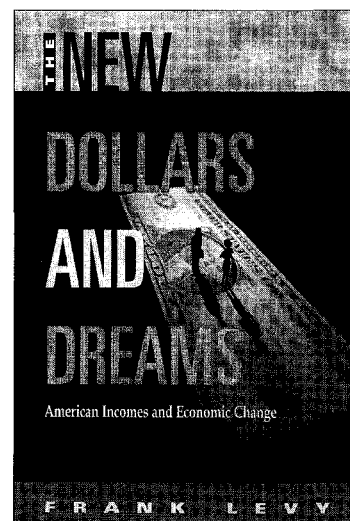
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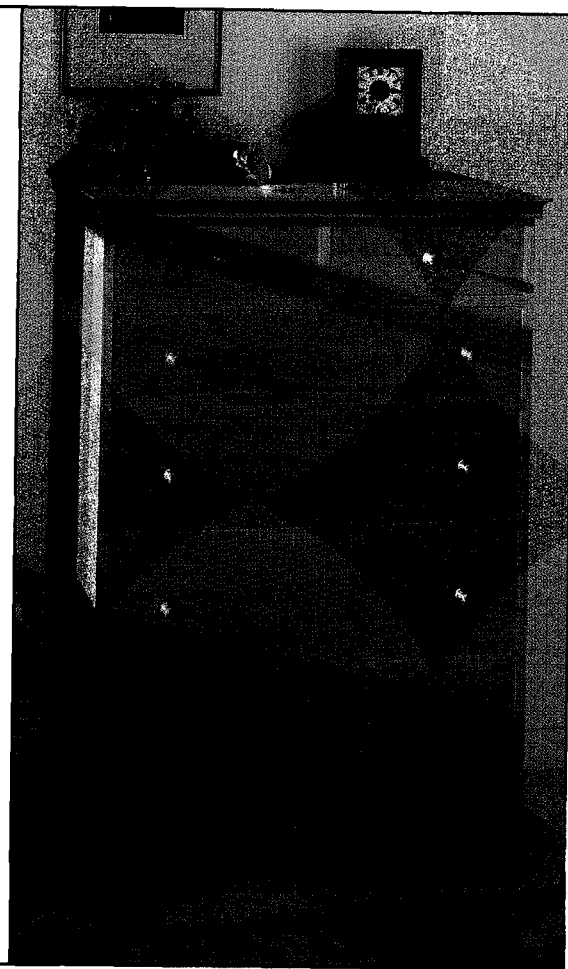
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catalogue, illustrated with lithographs from its catalogues of a century ago.

What makes this a movement, rather than simply a hobby like collecting old phonograph records, is the ideological drumbeat that accompanies almost every piece of prose on the subject. People who collect old phonograph records may think that big-band music is superior to rap; they may think that Caruso was a better singer than Pavarotti; some may even think that vinyl records sound better than CDs. But none, so far as I can tell, think they are saving the planet by indulging in what most of us would view as a simple personal choice of leisure-time pursuit.

Nor, I imagine, do people who collect old phonograph records have as little fun as the native-and-heirloom and grow-it-from-seed crusaders seem to much of the time. The hectoring and moralistic tone of much of their literature is instantly recognizable to readers of a certain kind of environmental writing. A typical offering in this genre is a classroom study guide on native plants and preserving genetic diversity published by the Missouri Botanical Garden, which asks students to engage in thought-provoking exercises—for example, “List five ways in which your life would be different if the world’s tomato crops were suddenly decimated by a disease.” (“We’ll only have V-7 juice from now on”?)

The most all-encompassing exhortation I encountered to grow native and heirloom vegetables and flowers from seed was from a company called Seeds of Change, in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Its catalogue is a strikingly handsome four-color publication with the usual seductive pictures of riotous green abundance and nary a corn borer or weed, and for that matter not even much dirt, in sight. But that’s where the resemblance to the ordinary ends. Interspersed with listings for Anasazi Flour Corn and Indian Woman Yellow Dry Bush Bean (“RARE, TRADITIONAL”), Early Jersey Wakefield Cabbage (“HEIRLOOM”), and calendula, a.k.a. pot marigold (“TRADITIONAL, MEDICINAL”) are promises that by growing traditional and native plants from seed one can save “the world’s fragile gene pool,” experience “the intense interconnectedness” of the earth and the “unity of the biosphere,” improve one’s health, reverse the depletion of non-

renewable resources, resist social disruption in rural communities, and a few more things that I forget.

Earlier publications on heirloom vegetables tended to emphasize the idea that traditional varieties taste better, and there is some truth to that: some (though by no means all) of the modern hybrid varieties have been developed to meet the demands of commercial growers, who often value shelf life and time of ripening over taste. But many heirloom varieties are, frankly, not as good as hybrids available now. A number of hybrid strains of tomatoes are resistant to plagues such as fusarium and verticillium wilt, tobacco mosaic virus, and nematodes, which have driven home gardeners to distraction. New varieties of sweet corn

are much sweeter and more flavorful, and keep that sweetness and flavor for hours, as opposed to minutes, after they're picked. This may explain why proponents of heirlooms are shifting to more cosmic justifications for their cause.

Saving the planet does not come cheap, I should add. Many heirloom varieties retail for as much as or more than the latest hybrids. A 150 mg packet (about 1/200 of an ounce) of Certified Organic Burbank Red Slicing Heirloom Tomato seed goes for \$2.29 at Seeds of Change; Burpee sells its Early Girl hybrid tomato seed for about one third that per gram.

For those ready to advance to the next level of consciousness, Seeds of Change offers its "Deep Diversity" catalogue (\$6.00, but availability is "limited"), which contains hundreds of additional varieties for "serious and adventuresome gardeners and seed savers dedicated to the preservation of biodiversity."

Is there anything to all of this? Can we really save (or destroy) the planet in our very own back yards?

The basic claims of the horticultural nativists seem to fall into two categories. One is what might be termed direct effects. Several thousand native plant

species are considered to be under threat from habitat destruction or competition from alien species. Accidental imports that stowed away in ships' ballast or animal bedding and took root on American soil, or deliberate imports, such as cornflower and English ivy, that jumped the garden fence and ran wild, now

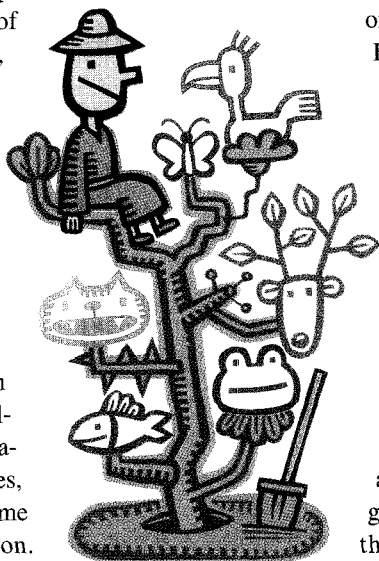
make up as much as a quarter of the wild flora of New England; certain regions, such as the Hawaiian Islands, face an even more acute threat from escaped imports. Native plants provide habitat for other plant and animal species, so their loss threatens to have extended ecological consequences. By eschewing particularly invasive and escape-prone aliens, gardeners can diminish the pressure on native species in their vicinity.

(On the other hand, an embarrassingly large number of alien and highly invasive plants turn out to contribute valuable food and habitat to endangered fauna, including monarch butterflies and a number of birds.)

And by cultivating rare native plants, gardeners can help to ensure that these species survive even if they vanish altogether from the wild. Steven Clements, the Brooklyn Botanic Garden's director of science, notes that a number of cultivated native plants have already disappeared from the wild in America; franklinia, a beautiful flowering tree discovered in the late eighteenth century by the American botanist John Bartram along the Altamaha River in Georgia, has never been seen in the wild since. All franklinias in gardens today are probably derived from the specimens Bartram collected.

Of course, there is a danger that enthusiastic native-plant gardeners will create a demand for rare species that will be met not by propagation by ethical nurserymen but by illegal collecting from the wild. That has certainly been the fate of some much-coveted orchids and cacti.

The second argument about backyard biodiversity, which is made far more of-



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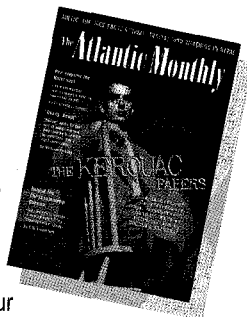
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ten and with considerably more passion, is an indirect one—that the gene pools of even well-established cultivated species are being dangerously diminished by the practices of seed companies. Since the 1940s plant developers have increasingly dropped old standard varieties in favor of hybrids, which are produced by pollinating plants from one breeding line with the pollen from another and then collecting the seeds that result. Conventional plant breeding involves repeatedly selecting individual plants that show a desirable characteristic, such as disease resistance or high yield or earliness. But strains that happen to have one of these desirable traits often have severe shortcomings in other departments that can be weeded out only by selective breeding over many generations. Hybridization allows for a swift melding of the best traits of several different strains. Moreover, there is a long-recognized bonanza inherent in the very act of hybridization—hybrid vigor. Crossing two genetically diverse parents tends to cancel out debilitating recessive traits that can become fixed in an inbred line. Thus hybrid seeds produce plants with qualities that are far more consistent than, and often far superior to, those of either of the parent lines. Hybrids are the force that fomented the Green Revolution, more than doubling the yield per acre of rice, corn, and other grains.

But the unique combination of traits produced during hybridization is lost in the next generation. Even when a hybrid plant pollinates itself, its genes recombine by the laws of chance; the seeds a hybrid produces carry a spectrum of unpredictable traits. The only way to reproduce the hybrid's desirable characteristics is by recrossing the parent lines each year. In other words, the farmer or gardener has to go back to the seed company each year for fresh seed. That fact has perhaps inevitably reinforced the feeling on the part of grassroots enthusiasts that they are striking a blow for the common man, as well as for biodiversity, by refusing to embrace the hybrid revolution. By growing "open-pollinated"—that is, non-

hybrid—strains of vegetables and flowers, the seed savers argue, they are maintaining a living, standing library of genetic diversity that may be crucial to the viability of these species. To quote from "Starting From Seed,"

The genetic diversity of food crops everywhere is eroding at an unprecedented and accelerating rate. . . . without . . . infusions of genetic diversity, food production worldwide is at risk from epidemics and infestations. . . . about six percent of all vegetable varieties are dropped from seed catalogs every year. . . . the varieties that are dropped often represent the life's work of several generations of gardeners or breeders.

One frequently cited example of the danger of relying on hybrids is the 1970 outbreak of southern corn blight, which destroyed 15 percent of the corn crop in the United States; subsequent investigation showed that 71 percent of the U.S. crop that year had been planted in six hybrid varieties that all carried a previously undetected genetic susceptibility to the disease.

The trouble with this line of argument for backyard biodiversity, however, is that the heirloom open-pollinated varieties grown by home gardeners are hardly the last bastion of genetic diversity. In fact, they are not even a



terribly significant one. The mistake of 1970 was not corrected by someone who had ordered Hopi Magenta Parch Corn from the Seeds of Change catalogue; it was corrected by those "agrichemical conglomerates" who have been systematically collecting and preserving samples of corn strains from all over the world on a huge scale. Tapping into their germ-plasm libraries, the companies were quickly able to develop new hybrids that eliminated the defective

gene. Indeed, the very business of producing hybrids creates an enormous incentive for the discovery and preservation of what breeders usually term "landraces"—traditional open-pollinated varieties.

William Niebur, the director of maize research for Pioneer Hi-Bred, the major producer of hybrid corn, says that "from a historical perspective every hybrid represents the crossing of, conservatively, twenty-five to seventy-five different genetic families." Pioneer maintains, in cold storage, seeds representing every original strain it has worked with since the 1920s; the company also carries out field tests of more than 100,000 new corn hybrids each year. The U.S. Department of Agriculture maintains a vast national germ-plasm bank as well. "If the genetic diversity is effectively maintained in the public or private sector on reserve, has it been lost?" Niebur asks.

In fact, rather than preserving diversity, replanting seed saved each year from open-pollinated varieties may result in a loss of old strains, since it will almost surely cause significant change owing to natural selection and random genetic "drift"; eventually the heirloom variety lovingly tended year after year will resemble its ancestor no more than a CD player resembles a Victrola. To insist that the only way to preserve traditional strains is to grow them in gardens is a bit like saying that the only way to preserve Model T Fords is to drive them to the store every day. Most people would think that keeping them in museums, where they can be conserved and studied, is as good an idea, if not a better one.

One recurring theme in modern environmentalism has been the tendency to take often trivial and intensely personal choices and elevate them to the status of global moral imperatives. I am not sure whether this tendency simply reflects misguided earnestness or indicates something deeper—a wish to justify and give a sense of importance and high drama to the many trivial and intensely personal choices we make in our lives. But I am reasonably certain that when I wavered over a choice between the Crete Hybrid Muskmelon and the Jenny Lind Heirloom Melon as I filled out my seed order this winter, the world did not tremble. ☼

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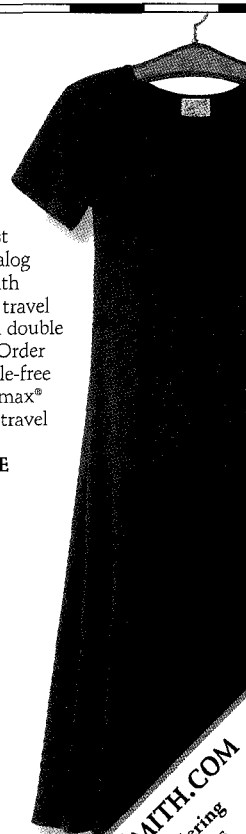
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Red Sauce Revisited

*The backlash against a noble tradition
has gone too far*

WHEN "northern Italian" cuisine swept American restaurants and gourmet kitchens twenty years ago, the forces of taste and discrimination vowed to roll back the noxious red tide of slow-cooked tomato sauce that had long inundated Italian restaurants. "No red sauce,"

proclaimed ads for Michela's, a Boston restaurant intent on breaking the Little Italy mold. Tomato paste was banned as zealously as flour-thickened sauces had been from nouvelle cuisine, and with the same unexpectedly caloric and indi-

gestible results: substitute pasta sauces were often gloppy affairs clotted with cheese and cream, unrecognizable to Italians from any region. Tomatoes were relegated to quick-cooked or outright raw sauces.

Even Italian-Americans turned their backs on the "gravy" that had perfumed the house every Sunday when they were growing up. I found some of this aversion on a recent trip to Naples, birthplace of many of the cooks who made red sauce synonymous with Italian food in America. I was asking

everyone I met about the Ur-gravy: *ragù*, one of the masterpieces of a cuisine and a region with which I am helplessly infatuated. Mine was the fervor of a convert. "I swore I'd never learn to make *ragù*," one young woman with whom I shared a table at Da Michele, the city's most venerated pizzeria, told me. "I woke up smelling it every Sunday." Another tablemate, a young software designer who said he bought only tomatoes raised on certain foothills of Mount Vesuvius, solemnly announced, "Meat should never contaminate the taste of good fresh tomato sauce."

My conversion from the meatless, quick-cooked tomato sauces I had long advocated took place along the Naples waterfront, at Cantina di Trionfo, a mom-and-pop wine shop by day and restaurant by night, whose chef, Tina Nicodemo, sticks to Neapolitan home cooking. I couldn't get over the mellow depth of her dense, mahogany-colored *ragù*, which coated big fat tubes of very al dente pasta like glistening lacquer. In *ragù* the tomato's natural sweetness and acidity are concentrated and enriched by garlic and several kinds of meat, none of which dominates. If fashionable fresh tomato sauces are piccolos or flutes, I decided, *ragù* is an oboe or a cello.

Creating this orchestral resonance takes many, many hours: so long does *ragù* cook that it is also called *alla guardaporta*, the idea being that doormen stay in one place long enough to tend the sauce. Food this vibrant hardly deserves to be abandoned. Sitting at one of Nicodemo's intimate, familial tables, I was determined to give it a home in my own kitchen, even if that meant hours of work and a very fragrant house. Help was at hand—both on site, from the enthusiastic and outgoing Nicodemo, whose father was a butcher and whose family cared about traditional Neapolitan food, and on my return home, from *Naples at Table*, a recently published and long-overdue book in which the writer and radio host Arthur Schwartz introduces American audiences to a thrilling cuisine that in its native form is anything but clichéd.

Ragù is the basis for the traditional Sunday lunch, whose first course is pas-

ta and second course is the meats used to flavor the sauce, lightly dressed with *ragù*. This thrifty reuse, reminiscent of the Jewish sabbath meal of chicken soup followed by chicken, differentiates Neapolitan *ragù* from the version that northern-Italian gourmets know, which is popular in the meat- and fat-happy region of Emilia-Romagna. *Ragù bolognese* features ground meat bathed in wine, cream, and tomato. *Ragù napoletano* starts with pieces of meat, which are stewed in tomato puree and removed after a few hours, when they are tender and sweet; the sauce keeps simmering, extremely slowly, for hours more. I much prefer the Neapolitan version, which acquires a strong but subtle and tempered meat flavor. By comparison, *ragù bolognese* seems like something for a fancy sloppy joe.

WHATEVER food fashion may dictate, garden-fresh tomatoes are available in sauce-making quantity for at best three months a year. The rest of the time Italians use canned tomatoes—either put up at home or, much more commonly, from the store. Matters could hardly be otherwise when simple tomato sauce is the default pasta preparation.

My *ragù* experiments led me to a newfound appreciation of tomato paste, which is nothing more than tomatoes cooked to a thicker concentration than puree, with none of the additives I mistakenly remembered. Tomato paste has the deep flavor that many chefs and home cooks have come to admire in slow-roasted tomatoes. What matters most, of course, is the flavor and ripeness of the tomatoes at the start—and it's more than likely that tomatoes at a canning plant are riper and better than tomatoes at the supermarket.

One of the reasons *ragù* became a Naples emblem is that the tomatoes of Campania, the region around Naples, are considered the most deliciously fruity in Italy; their only rivals grow in Puglia, to the southeast. Tomatoes arrived in Italy from the New World by way of the Spanish, who ruled Naples for centuries and planted tomatoes in the lava-rich Campanian soil. When tomatoes were conquering local cuisine, in the eighteenth century, pasta was about to enter industrial production, and the marriage of the two was inevitable.

Amounts of puree that would elsewhere be extravagant could serve as a stewing medium for the economy cuts of meat families allowed themselves on Sunday. Even today women throughout southern Italy put up months' worth of tomato puree during the August and September harvest. Turning a corner in a village, you may happen upon communal metal barrels full of bottles of all shapes and sizes, simmering over open flames.

It's easy to assume that no tomatoes in this country are anywhere near as sweet or potent as the ones Neapolitans have in their cupboards and grocery stores. I made this assumption until I tasted seven brands of imported Italian tomatoes I found here, four kinds I brought home from Naples, and several American brands. To my surprise, the Italian brands didn't do very well against the American ones. One reason is that they taste of the tin. The acid in tomatoes interacts with the metal used in cans (as it does with aluminum, which is why tomatoes should not be cooked in an unlined aluminum pan), and the longer the tomatoes stay in the can the more pronounced the metallic flavor will be. (Neapolitans buy their puree in bottles, which are rarely exported.) Canned tomatoes are undated, and there is no way of knowing how long they have been on the shelf; American products are likely to turn over faster.

This would matter less if Italian tomatoes tasted significantly better than those grown here, but my comparison did not persuade me that they do. I was unimpressed with the San Marzano tomatoes I found, which are usually said to be the best. (Although tomatoes from one growing area, called San Marzano Agro-Sarnese-Nocerino, are protected by European Union law, there is nothing to prevent an American producer from putting "San Marzano-style" on a label; the fact that the name refers not only to an agricultural area in Campania but also to many varieties of canning tomatoes further complicates matters.) And I was particularly disappointed by chopped tomatoes and puree from aseptic packs, commonly sold under the Pomì label. I had remembered these to be the best alternative to fresh, but even though they are free of any metallic tinge, I found them to have an unpleasant tomato-soup flavor.



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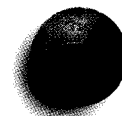
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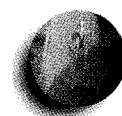
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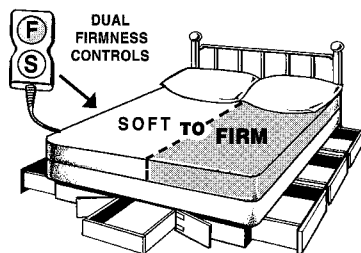


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The freshest and best flavor can usually be found in tomatoes with no added salt or those packed in cans lined with white enamel, which prevents the acid-metal interaction. And yet the best no-salt-added tomatoes of the several I tried, Trader Joe's house brand, were not packed in enameled cans, and the best-tasting whole peeled tomatoes—from Muir Glen, of Petaluma, California—are unavailable without salt. Muir Glen's tomato puree and paste, happily, have no added salt, and are by far the best I tasted. American tomatoes thus pose no impediment to the ever-tricky goal of authenticity, though American meat does not taste the same as Italian.

Neapolitan *ragù* makes use of modest secondary cuts of beef and pork that require long and slow cooking to be tender and palatable—just the cuts that are hard to find today, because dishes that require hours of cooking, even largely unsupervised, have fallen out of most people's everyday repertory. One of my favorite such cuts is beef shin, full of collagen that melts to gelatin and gives sheen and body to a sauce or stew. The meat itself becomes as tender as corned beef or brisket but is not nearly as fatty. Beef shin is usually a special-order item, but its younger counterpart has become popular as osso buco, which is veal shin cut across the bone. Ask for boned veal shin, if the butcher is amenable; beef shin, which costs much less, is usually sold boned. Some Chinese and Italian butchers sell fresh pig's trotters, which can be put to good use: the section just above the foot is the shin, and the rind covering it will enrich the sauce. Pork short ribs are a *ragù* fundamental, and relatively easy to find in American supermarkets; ask for them trimmed of the brisket meat.

Perhaps to make the Sunday lunch more luxurious, Neapolitans often flavor *ragù* with beef rolls, or *braciole*, cooked from start to finish in the sauce; in *Naples at Table*, Schwartz gives a recipe for pounded slices of beef chuck or top round rolled and stuffed with pine nuts, parsley, garlic, Parmigiano-Reggiano, and raisins, simmered in *ragù*. These will add marvelous complexity (and give you a very nice dinner), but fresh pork sausage made without any seasoning will give an equally typical, and purer, flavor.

To make *ragù*, warm a quarter cup of olive oil over medium heat in a wide, heavy-bottomed pan; keep an additional half cup of oil in reserve. Add two and a half pounds of beef or veal shin, cut into roughly three-inch chunks and trimmed of fat but not of the collagen-rich cartilage, and one and a half pounds of pork shin (if you can't find pork shin, use a pound and a half more beef or veal shin). Add one and a half pounds of pork short ribs, cut into sections of one or two ribs each. Over a medium-high flame brown the pieces on all sides in batches, keeping the pieces in one layer and adding more oil as needed. A screened lid will be useful, or leave the meat uncovered. Lightly smash eight large or ten medium cloves of garlic with the flat of a cooking knife, remove the peel and any green shoots in the center, and add the cloves while the meat browns. The garlic will sweeten during the long cooking and disappear into the sauce. It must not brown or blacken, and if you are generous with the oil it won't. Keep sautéing the meat over medium heat for thirty to forty-five minutes, adding oil as needed and moving the pieces so that they don't stick. You need to use all the oil in any case: it will emulsify with the proteins in the meat, carry flavor, and ensure that the sauce coats pasta properly.

Put all the pieces of browned meat back into the pan and add two six-ounce cans of tomato paste whisked or stirred into two cups of a full-flavored red wine; a red typical of Campania—for example, Taurasi, produced by the Mastroberardini family—would be appropriate, but a Dolcetto or a Barbera will also do nicely. Cook partly covered over a low flame for at least another hour, until the liquid is reduced by half or more. The sugars in the tomato paste can easily scorch, so it is important to stir often. A traditional Neapolitan technique is to incorporate the dissolved paste in successive additions of several spoonfuls at a time, reducing after each addition; this will result in a deeper and more layered flavor, but it's more work.

When the liquid is reduced, add one pound of fresh sausage and all the puree: three quarts if you are using puree from an aseptic pack or (a better choice) drained whole canned tomatoes passed through a food mill. If you are using canned puree, reduce the amount to two

and a half quarts, because in this country canned puree is considerably thicker than what Neapolitans buy in bottles. Make sure the pan is large enough to hold the full amount of liquid before you pour it in: a wide Dutch oven is preferable to a soup pot, because the goal is evaporation. Stir well and bring to a very light simmer. Cover the pan, leaving about half an inch exposed. Lower the flame as far as possible or put the pot over a heat diffuser for the final and very long cooking. The liquid should faintly bubble somewhere on the surface every second or two.

Simmer the sauce for at least eight more hours. About two hours after adding the puree, check the ribs and smaller pieces of shin meat, and remove them if they are done: the rib meat should come away from the bone with hardly a nudge, and the shin meat should cut almost as easily as baked fish. When the larger pieces of shin meat are done, take out all the remaining meat; when you serve it, gently reheated, paint each piece with a bit of sauce. Stir the pot every half hour or so. If you leave the sauce unattended for more than an hour, don't then scrape the bottom of the pan, lest you incorporate charcoal; instead pour the sauce into a clean pot and continue to heat it. After the browning of the meat I hardly smelled the sauce, even when returning from an errand or waking up—and I simmered mine for a full twenty-four hours. Those Neapolitan and Italian-American grandchildren, I decided, were giving *ragù* a bum rap.

The sauce is ready when it is as thick as applesauce and the oil forms a dark, deep pool on the surface. Total simmering time depends on the width of the pan, the heat of the flame, and the thickness of the puree. The darker the color, the better and more potent the sauce. Final yield will be about two quarts.

Neapolitans like showing off *ragù* with gigantic pasta tubes that take the sauce onto their inner surfaces. Cook the widest-gauge pasta you can find al dente; drain the pasta and sauté it, still wet, over medium heat for two minutes along with just enough sauce to coat each piece lightly. Be restrained in the amount of Parmigiano-Reggiano you sprinkle over the pasta before serving. The sauce is the showpiece, and the reputation of an unfairly slighted cuisine is at stake. ☞

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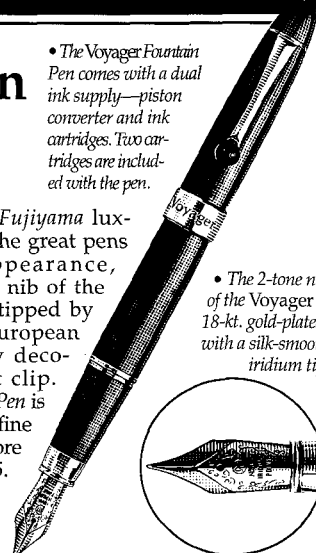
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The Making of the English Middle Class

Under Margaret Thatcher and now under Tony Blair, Britain has become markedly less class-bound. How did this happen?

by Geoffrey Wheatcroft



THE RISE AND FALL OF CLASS IN BRITAIN

by David Cannadine.
Columbia University Press,
293 pages, \$29.95.

LAST Christmas wasn't very merry for Tony Blair. On the day before Christmas Eve two members of his government resigned in the wake of a minor financial scandal; one of them was Peter Mandelson, his most trusted sidekick in what has been at once pompously and mysteriously called the "Blair project." After this turmoil, we were told, the Prime Minister thought that his endangered project needed what some called a "relaunch." (Yes, people do use the language of glossy-magazine promotion, and yes, it does say something about modern politics.) And so in January, at a seminar in London to examine center-left political positions for the coming century, Blair began this vaunted relaunch with a keynote speech. Lincoln spoke of government of the people, by the people, and for the people. Churchill spoke of blood, toil, tears, and sweat. Roosevelt talked of four freedoms. Tony Blair chose to talk about social class.

"Slowly but surely the old establishment is being replaced by a new, larger, more meritocratic middle class," he said. "A middle class characterized by greater tolerance of difference, greater ambition to succeed, greater opportunities to earn a decent living. A middle class that will include millions of people who traditionally may see themselves as working-class, but whose ambitions are

far broader than those of their parents and grandparents.” Although this was a prime specimen of Blair’s rhetorical style (whose distinguishing mark is the adman’s verb-starved sentence), he wasn’t the first British Prime Minister to dilate on the subject. When his predecessor, John Major, succeeded Margaret Thatcher, in 1990, he announced as his goal “a classless society,” by which he meant a society in which “we remove the artificial barriers to choice and achievement.” And Thatcher herself had touched on the topic, albeit to claim, “Class is a communist concept. It groups people as bundles and sets them against one another” (and also, more famously, to insist that “there is no such thing as society”).

All political leaders in advanced democracies are concerned with prosperity, economic opportunity, social mobility. But is there any other country where leaders talk quite like this, about what class means (or doesn’t mean), and what class the voters belong to, or should belong to? In 1940 George Orwell claimed that England “is the most class-ridden country under the sun”; in an oblique way those politicians’ reflections might seem to confirm this, or at least to show that we English are more absorbed by the subject than others.

Almost sixty years after Orwell, David Cannadine begins his fascinating and deeply enjoyable new book by addressing this view: that the British are “obsessed with class in the way that other nations are obsessed with food or race or sex or drugs or alcohol.” Cannadine is an eminent English historian, now in his late forties, who spent ten years as a professor at Columbia University before recently returning home. He has made a specialty of the subject of class—or, rather, of “the classes,” as they used to be called (in contrast to “the masses”): one of his best-known books is *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy* (1990). His perspective on the matter is distinctive. Despite the title of his new book, he knows very well that class can’t rise or fall in a concrete sense. Despite John Major, there never has been and never will be such a thing as a classless society anywhere. Cannadine acknowledges that “classes will always be with us, as long as there remain inequalities in income, differences in occupation, and variations in wealth that can be objectively observed”—which

is to say in any imaginable human grouping, past, present, or future.

As Cannadine says, the class-based interpretation of history that once held such sway among Marxist historians—and even those who weren’t formally Marxist—is now endorsed by “almost no one among a younger generation of British historians,” because it has become clear that the pattern of economic development that provided “the materialist motor for the Marxist model was neither as neat nor as simple as was once claimed.” Master narratives are no longer fashionable, because they no longer seem credible, even to old believers. Thirty-five years ago the venerable Marxist historian E. P. Thompson wrote one of the most influential books of its time, *The Making of the English Working Class* (1964). If he of all people could write later, toward the end of his life, “‘Class’ was perhaps overworked in the 1960s and 1970s, and it had become merely boring. It is a concept long past its sell-by date,” then the game was up.

What concerns historians now is not that materialist model but perception, consciousness, “mentalities,” the “linguistic turn”—how we are to be understood by how we talk and write about ourselves—and cultures. An excellent example of this new history is the Oxford historian Ross McKibbin’s splendid book *Classes and Cultures: England 1918–1951* (1998), whose approach is doubly interesting. In telling the story of a great nation in an extraordinary historical period it pays almost no attention to national politics or international affairs; and it examines how people lived quite as much in terms of the cultures of its title as of the classes, looking less at getting and spending and the means of production and more at the music people listened to, the movies they watched, and the sports they played.

THE English have been thinking and writing about class, and trying to understand it, for many centuries. Looking back over the period from the seventeenth century to this one, Cannadine sees three basic concepts of social division: hierarchical, triadic, and dichotomous. In the first we are all part of “the great chain of being” stretching from highest to lowest, with every man in his place and (it was to be hoped) every man

knowing his place. In 1688 Gregory King divided English society with pedantic nicety into twenty-six ranks and degrees. Several centuries later Evelyn Waugh put it differently: simple class categories did not apply in a country whose hierarchy was defined by “a single wholly imaginary line (a Platonic idea) extending from Windsor to Wormwood Scrubs,” a line “of whose existence every Englishman is sharply aware,” and that, Waugh thought, spiced life “very pleasantly.” In the triadic version there are three classes: upper, middle, and lower, or gentry, burghers, and toilers. And the dichotomous version sees just rich and poor, high and low, few and many, haves and have-nots, “us” and “them.” Although Marx distinguished aristocracy from bourgeoisie, seeing the latter as supplanting the former, his underlying view was dichotomous: society was ultimately divided between those who controlled the means of production and those—the proletarian masses—who did not.

Apart from its questionable analytical value, the traditional class-based view of history is undermined by something that Cannadine thoughtfully discusses. Marx’s assertion that the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle is famous, and false. History has been marked by class cooperation as often as by class conflict. Some polemicists, and some historians, thought that rich and poor should have come to blows, and have been puzzled by why this did not happen. Even a Tory could be struck by the fact that society functioned because most people accepted it, economic injustices and all. Samuel Johnson observed, “If the poor should reason, ‘We’ll be the poor no longer, we’ll make the rich take their turn,’ they could easily do it.” But they didn’t, and the truth is that most people in eighteenth-century England (Orwell made the same observation about the country 200 years later) seemed to have acquiesced in the existing order of things. Where there was physical rebellion, in America in 1776 and Ireland in 1798, its causes were more patriotic than economic. The poor of America and Ireland might have accepted that the rich were richer if the rich had been American or Irish, as indeed they subsequently did accept it.

According to Evelyn Waugh, “Generations of English have used the epithets

'common' and 'middle-class' as general pejoratives to describe anything which gets on their nerves." And yet, as Cannadine says, those who embraced the triadic model of English society almost always themselves came from the middle part; it could equally be said that generations of English have celebrated their country as a nation of burghers and tradesmen. Daniel Defoe was eloquent on the subject, and Oliver Goldsmith thought that "in this middle order of mankind are generally to be found all the arts, wisdom and virtues of society"—words that Tony Blair might like to borrow.

What has long been considered the critical moment for the study of class in England is the period 1780 to 1840, which saw the Industrial Revolution and the making of the English working class, as we were once taught by Thompson. With his suspicion of overarching explanations, Cannadine is skeptical about all of this. But I am sure that the period really was decisive in terms of class in England, though perhaps not in the way that Thompson thought.

LOOK back a century before Victoria came to the throne, or two centuries before Orwell wrote. Could anyone have said that England was "the most class-ridden country under the sun" in 1740? Not even the Communist Historians' Group, of the fifties, could have argued that the poor were at that time more harshly oppressed in England than in other countries. And something crucial did happen in 1780–1840. The advent of industrialization saw the transformation of a society based on rank or hierarchy into one based on class. Without doubt this affected that growth of working-class consciousness which so exercised the historians of a previous generation. But it also meant something else quite as interesting, which might be called the making of the English upper-middle class.

The great Reform Bill of 1832 changed the House of Commons by doing away with rotten boroughs, rationalizing constituencies, and, rather slightly, enlarging the franchise. This was seen by some, then and since, as a defeat for aristocratic power. Even Marx and Engels were for a time convinced that the struggles of the 1830s and 1840s—with parliamentary reform followed by the repeal of the protectionist Corn Laws

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favoring the landed interests—had seen the patricians at last defeated. But the radical *Poor Man's Guardian* wrote perceptively at the time that reform might rather have been an attempt not “to subvert, or even re-model, our aristocratic institutions, but to consolidate them by a reinforcement of sub-aristocracy from the middle classes.” As another contemporary put it, “a large portion of the middle ranks” had been detached from the working class—a game that intelligent conservative politicians have been playing ever since, and not just in England.

Late Georgian society was acutely rank-conscious, as Jane Austen's novels testify, and consciousness of rank persisted throughout the next century and beyond. But there was also an increasing sense of solidarity among “educated” people of widely different economic standing. It was fostered by the rapidly expanding “public” schools, and by universities that also expanded as their role as clerical seminaries diminished. Cannadine says that by the middle of the nineteenth century “virtually anyone with a public-school education might be described as a gentleman, regardless of his parents' social background.” It has been put more wittily, and almost more accurately, by another writer: In the Georgian age Eton and Winchester were for the sons of gentlemen; by the Victorian age the public schools were for the fathers of gentlemen.

What I mean by the making of the upper-middle class is associated with a new concept of “the gentleman.” And it is illustrated in no better way than by something that has obsessed or depressed the English to this day: accent, or pronunciation. Until some time under the Georges an Englishman of any class, squire as well as yokel, was likely to speak with the accent of “his country,” meaning Somerset, Yorkshire, or Norfolk. People of all classes elsewhere—Italians, Germans, and Americans—still do. Uniquely in England there shortly came into being a more or less universal accent for everyone above a certain social status from one end of the country to the other: the “received,” or “Oxford,” accent. Orwell rather accurately called it the accent that is disliked by those in England who don't speak with it, and not much liked by those who do. And its significance is related to something else

Orwell said: “The peculiarity of English class distinctions is not that they are unjust—for after all, wealth and poverty exist side by side in almost all countries—but that they are anachronistic,” in that they don't exactly correspond to economic distinctions. What Orwell's “anachronistic” meant, and what the cult of the gentleman demonstrates, is that English class consciousness was out of kilter with Marxian concepts of class.

Take two specimens, Bert Brass and Simon Simper. Bert is a self-made millionaire. In Engels's time his fortune would have come from cotton mills; today it more likely comes from car dealerships or asset-stripping fringe banks. In any case, he has little education, speaks with a broad accent, and has uncultivated (though not necessarily cheap) tastes. For his part, Simon is the son of a clergyman and was educated at Winchester and Oxford. He likes to travel abroad, to go to the opera, and to lunch at his London club, though affording all this isn't easy, because he is a “briefless barrister,” barely able to make ends meet. Bert is very rich, owns the means of production, and in Marxian terms belongs to the haute bourgeoisie. Simon is penniless, owns nothing except his sense of caste, and is “petty bourgeois.” And yet to anyone English—at least anyone from Simon's background—their status is the other way round: Simon is upper-middle-class and a gentleman; Bert is lower-middle-class and “common.”

This distinction has colored, but also occluded, social and political life. One of Cannadine's sections is called “The ‘Politics of Class’ Denied”: it discusses the difficulties of understanding English society and politics in the nineteenth century in simple terms of class, when both the dichotomous and triadic models of society oversimplified reality, and when both offered limited help in understanding political developments. That is, Lord Palmerston would never have spoken of a classless society. In his famous “Don Pacifico” speech of 1850 he told the House of Commons, in words no politician today would lightly utter, “We have shown the example of a nation, in which every class of society accepts with cheerfulness the lot which Providence has assigned to it.” And yet he went on to say something that Margaret Thatcher or Tony Blair could easily echo: “At the

same time every individual of each class is constantly striving to raise himself in the social scale.”

This very long-running theme of social aspiration and mobility is the nub of Cannadine's “fall of class.” The phrase can refer to the change in historical fashion already discussed. It can mean something that Orwell perceived almost sixty years ago, and that is highly germane to both Cannadine's analysis and Blair's project—the embourgeoisement of society, the spread of the middle class upward and downward at the same time, and the associated emergence of what Orwell called a quite new breed of English people of indeterminate social class. This leads in turn to a “fall” that Cannadine barely discusses, though it is very important: the unmaking of the upper-middle class, in terms of the hegemonic thrall it once exercised but no longer does. And all these relate to one last “fall,” which is to say the decline of class politics. This may yet come to be seen as the great theme of English history in the past generation, since Margaret Thatcher came to power in 1979.

Like most English academics, Cannadine can barely govern his distaste for Thatcher. He does his best to address her importance, but revealingly refers to “the more bracing advent of New Labour” and doesn't give Thatcher anything like enough credit for her own bracing impact as a social revolutionary. Forty years ago the Conservative Prime Minister Harold Macmillan announced that the class war was over and “we have won it”—a barb that the Tory journalist Sir Peregrine Worsthorne repeated thirty years later. It was also Worsthorne who coined the memorable phrase “bourgeois triumphalism” to describe Thatcher's years of power; this was cherished on the left as much as on the right, but was double-edged for the left when they quoted it with such relish. Bourgeois triumphalism meant also social revolution—even, arguably, the final defeat of the “toffs” Marx and Engels thought they had seen in the 1840s.

Under Thatcher the Tories finally became a meritocratic and populist party, for better or worse. And the purging of the toffs from politics has since continued apace. In the nineteenth century the House of Commons was full of MPs with titles—the elder sons of peers, like Lord Harting-

ton, or Irish peers, like Lord Palmerston, baronets called Sir John This, younger sons of dukes called Lord James That. By the 1990s there were just two lords left in the Commons, and, significantly enough, neither used his title. The Earl of Ancram, son of the Marquess of Lothian, likes to be called Mr. Ancram (which he isn't); and the Earl of Kilmorey, an Irish peer, calls himself Richard Needham. Even in the Tory party it's now somehow discreditable to be an aristocrat.

Or a public-school man. In the 1920s Stanley Baldwin said only half jocosely that on becoming Prime Minister, he had endeavored to form a Cabinet that Harrow could be proud of. Twenty years later another Old Harrovian Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, told the boys of Harrow that in the future "the advantages and privileges which have hitherto been enjoyed by the few shall be far more widely shared by the many." The 1997 general election returned the first House of Commons in nearly 300 years that contained not one MP educated at Harrow. The Conservatives haven't been led by a public-school man since Sir Alec Douglas-Home departed, in 1965, though funnily enough—and it *is* funny—Labour is now led by the public-school-educated Tony Blair. The Tories are in favor of meritocracy, upward mobility, and wealth creation—quite as much so as Blair.

So Cannadine's "fall" might allude to the class-based interpretations of history now so much out of fashion, but plainly doesn't describe the end of an economic class society with inequalities of wealth. Debates about the persistence of class continue. In *A Class Act* (1997), Andrew Adonis and Stephen Pollard have challenged the idea of "Britain's classless society," but the England that they describe turns out on examination to be very different from the class-ridden England of Orwell's time. There are still a monarchy and a peerage, though the peers are soon to be deprived of their last legislative rights; there is still an upper class; the rich are still richer than the poor. On the other side, Lord Bauer has written a denunciatory pamphlet, *Class on the Brain: The Cost of a British Obsession* (1997), which claims that "for about eight centuries Britain has not been a closed society, much less a caste society," that there have been few class barriers to wealth in England, and that to the extent that our

society became less open and flexible in the postwar years, "it needed the reforms of Mrs Thatcher's governments to reopen the road of opportunity."

Professor Peter Bauer (as he was until Thatcher elevated him to the peerage) is a distinguished free-market economist, of Hungarian descent, who writes with the zeal of a convert to English life, and makes some valid points. But the debate between him and Adonis and Pollard is largely a matter of nuance. Adonis and Pollard concede that there is now much more social mobility in England than there was even within living memory. The "super class" to which they devote an acidic chapter is very far from the old upper class of birth and rank, but is a "new elite of top professionals and managers, at once meritocratic yet exclusive, very highly paid yet powerfully convinced of the justice of its rewards, and increasingly divorced from the rest of society by wealth, education, values, residence and lifestyle." They deplore this on egalitarian grounds, but that description plainly doesn't distinguish this British super class from its counterparts elsewhere, notably in the United States. And in any case, isn't this "career open to the talents" just what the foes of the old aristocracy always wanted? What these authors do miss, and Cannadine too, is the gradual but truly fascinating disappearance of a "hegemonic" class society, in which the values of the upper or upper-middle class once exercised an extraordinary thrall but no longer do.

MY Evelyn Waugh quotations come from an essay Waugh wrote in 1955 during the "U and Non-U" fad, about which language was "U," or upper-class, and which not. As might be expected, Waugh's essay is painfully snobbish; as might also be expected, it is very acute. And it is now a relic. Twenty years or so after it was written, some excruciating book or other was published on "how to be upper-class," or suchlike nonsense, and was reviewed by Waugh's son. Auberger Waugh observed that books of this sort had become quite pointless, since they gave the rules to a game that no longer had any prizes: "No one wants to be thought a gentleman any longer except for pansies, foreigners and shady businessmen." What was true then is truer still another twenty years later. The gossip

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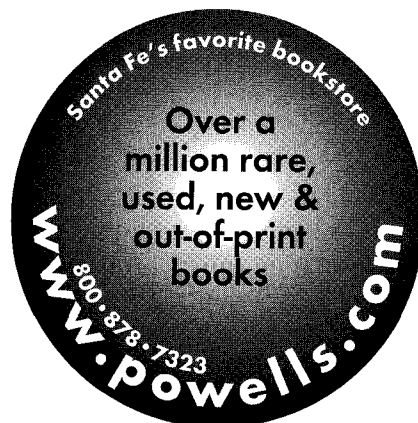
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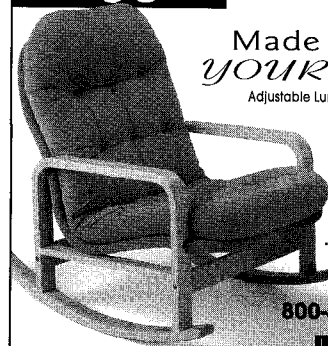
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columns of London newspapers are still full of the doings of our titled classes, but there is an unmistakable artificiality about this. Someone once defined journalism as saying "Lord Fitzbuggerie is dead" to a readership that didn't even know he was alive, but one wonders for how much longer newspapers will pretend that their readers are interested in him alive or dead.

For years past the sharpest indication of what Waugh *files* meant when he said that no one wanted to be thought a gentleman anymore has been that matter of accent. A universal upper- to upper-middle-class accent arrived sometime in the eighteenth century, and it is now departing. More and more well-born people speak "Mockney," or sham Cockney. That goes for at least one heir to a dukedom I can think of, and it certainly goes for Tony Blair, whose own *jes' folks* act includes audibly "lowering" his voice whenever he goes on a television chat show. Centuries of agonizing about correct accent, of striving English men and women who marked their upward mobility by "raising" their voices, has petered out in the marshes of "Estuary English," an amorphous, vaguely south-eastern, vaguely plebeian accent now spoken by people under thirty, rich and poor alike. Books are still written about the toffs. Charles Jennings's *People Like Us: A Season Among the Upper Classes* (1997) describes with ogling and sniggering fascination the doings of those who go to Ascot or the Henley regatta or deb dances. But for all his amused contempt, Jennings must know that he is a naturalist observing an endangered species. When I stray into the Turf Club tent at Cheltenham racecourse during the National Hunt meeting in March, I am conscious of visiting a tribe on a reservation.

Not only are upper-class values at a discount but the aristocracy has deserted its traditional avocations. The Church of England is the most striking case in point: a century ago it was a largely patrician body, today it is almost purely plebeian. And having left—or been driven out of—politics and diplomacy, the upper classes are now deserting the army as well. The younger son of a duke, who might once have served in the Grenadiers or as a clergyman, is now more likely to work as a photographer or in rock music.

In some ways all of this makes life easier for Tony Blair. Until the late nine-

teenth century English politics wasn't divided on class lines: Gladstone numbered dukes as well as laborers among his supporters. Then the Home Rule schism drove the upper classes into the Tory ranks. But just as important, as the Liberal politician Sir William Harcourt observed in 1894, "The horizontal division of parties was certain to come as a consequence of household suffrage": classless politics was incompatible with democracy.

Which is what Tony Blair wants to reverse. A sympathetic commentator has said that Blair's greatest ambition is "to take the class out of politics," undoing that horizontal division and leading a party with as wide a social support as Gladstone's. When the new middle class, with its greater ambition and opportunities, embraces most of the British people, then class will have fallen at last, Blair's project will be complete, and, like Mr. Gladstone, Blair can govern us until his eighties. ☼

The Grads of '69

by Wendy Kaminer

REBELS IN WHITE GLOVES:

Coming of Age
With Hillary's Class—
Wellesley '69

by Miriam Horn.
Times Books, 352 pages,
\$24.00.

HILLARY Rodham Clinton once described herself as a Rorschach test, suggesting that her public images reveal only the public's beliefs and biases, while she remains concealed from us. Her observation is partly true. Clinton is not exactly a cipher: listening to her for the past six years has surely given us some insight into her character and values. But like other charismatic celebrities, she has been both demonized and idealized; as a cultural cynosure, Hillary Clinton may be hard to recognize as a human being.

It is probably quite frustrating to ac-

quire a persona with which you don't identify, although if you're interested in privacy, a false persona may be preferable to one that's true. People erect their public images partly for the sake of taking cover in them. There are benefits as well to being considered symbolic of an age: your life acquires a theme or story line, which helps you to understand it and makes it matter to the rest of us.

Hillary Clinton is commonly considered emblematic of second-wave feminism—a movement that flourished in the 1960s and 1970s. She also stands for the particular cohort of educated white middle- and upper-class women born in the late 1940s, who entered their teens when the feminine mystique was still predominant and embarked on their twenties with feminism ascendant. Clinton seems to share the sense that she belongs to a class of women who experienced and implemented dramatic social change: "I have often thought of myself and my friends as transitional figures, maybe more sure of where we were coming from than where we were going," she remarked in an *Esquire* profile in 1993. "And friends of mine have described our coming of age as being on the cusp of changes that fundamentally redefined the role of women."

This view of Hillary and her friends is embraced by Miriam Horn in *Rebels in White Gloves*. Horn interviewed an unspecified number of women from the Wellesley class of 1969, in the apparent hope that their lives would illuminate their times (and appeal to the public's insatiable interest in Hillary Clinton). The life stories of a few Wellesley graduates are interspersed with thumbnail histories and analyses of the sexual revolution, the entry of women into the professions, the decline of the traditional feminine ideal, and the consequent changes in marriage and family life—the usual issues.

Horn is a competent writer who skillfully balances individual narratives with social commentary, and she understands her primary subject—contemporary feminism. But this is not an original book. We have heard stories like this before, in innumerable books and women's magazines; we have read multiple accounts of the social changes the stories reflect. This is primarily a book for Hillary groupies. She appears only indirectly (people talk about her), but she hovers over every page. There are several interesting, intel-

lilent, accomplished women portrayed in *Rebels in White Gloves*, but Horn persistently reminds us that they were "Hillary's classmates" and carefully notes their connections with the First Couple: one woman was "a frequent baby-sitter over the years of Chelsea Clinton."

If Horn is preoccupied with Hillary Clinton (and assumes that we are too), she seems awestruck by the 1960s. Born in the late 1950s, Horn was still a child when "Hillary's classmates" graduated from college. She offers no critical perspective on the familiar, unqualified image of the late 1960s as a turbulent, idealistic, anti-authoritarian time. This image is confirmed by many of the women Horn interviewed, as they recall their own rebellions: at Wellesley they were irreverent and sometimes angry, in defiance of Wellesley tradition and feminine norms; after Wellesley they entered communes, political cells, law schools, or New Age spiritual communities. They assumed traditional domestic roles at least a little defensively.

HORN'S characterization of these transitional years between the feminine mystique and feminism is not exactly inaccurate, but it is simplistic and overdramatized. "Like reluctant seafarers, one foot aboard ship, the other still reaching for familiar ground, the women of the Wellesley class of '69 spent their years at college poised precariously across a chasm between two worlds," Horn declares. When I read that passage to a friend who graduated from Wellesley in 1969, she laughed, unable to recall feeling quite so torn by social change.

In any case, a modicum of Sturm und Drang is probably a developmental hazard for college students as they enter young adulthood, finally liberated from parental supervision. Rebellion is surely a familiar theme for them. It is particularly familiar for college women; since the late 1800s they have aroused the anxieties of traditionalists. Of course, the late 1960s were marked by more than the usual political and sexual unrest. Of course, a lingering cult of gentility at women's colleges was in decline and invited disdain. Of course, many women from the class of '69 may agree with Hillary Clinton that they were "more sure of where we were coming from than where we were going." But that is hard-

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There is persistent pressure on Israel to bring "sacrifices for peace." It is understood that these "sacrifices" refer to greater "flexibility" in dealing with the Arabs, but mean primarily that Israel should allow its dismemberment, in order to bring peace to the region.

What are the facts?

A Bizarre Concept. The concept to bring "sacrifices for peace" is a new one that has never before found application in world history. It was created by Arab propaganda to induce Israel to agree to its dismemberment, to give strategic assets to those who are determined to destroy it.

Since its creation in 1948, Israel has been subjected to almost constant Arab terror, to unceasing Arab aggression, and to three major wars. In the Six-Day War, it recovered its heartland of Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank") and the eastern part of Jerusalem; it captured the Golan Heights from Syria, which had been used for decades to shell and spread terror over much of northern Israel; and it conquered Gaza and the Sinai Desert that had been used by Egypt as staging ground and invasion route to Israel.

Many Sacrifices for Peace. In order to achieve peace with its neighbors, Israel brought sacrifices for peace that have no precedent in the history of the world. For peace with Egypt, Israel returned the entire Sinai. There is little thanks on the part of Egypt for this generosity and this sacrifice for peace. The controlled Egyptian press spews daily anti-Israel venom. President Mubarak has never visited Jerusalem. It is the coolest possible peace. A sacrifice for peace brought in vain—probably a major act of folly on the part of Israel.

Israel made sacrifices for peace by signing a

peace treaty with Jordan. In that peace, Israel granted Jordan a large yearly allowance of fresh water from its own dwindling and meager resources and accepted a petty demand for "border rectification"—yielding of land. As for Syria, no offered sacrifice for peace seems to be sufficient to satisfy its dictator, President Hafez Assad. He is unwilling to consider even an ice-cold peace, except for Israel's total surrender of the Golan Heights. Fortunately, under the current Israeli government such a surrender is not in the cards.

The greatest sacrifice for peace that Israel has brought was the resuscitation of the bankrupt and moribund PLO terror organization and the acceptance of it "chairman"

Here are three good sacrifices that the Arabs could bring for peace: (1) Abandon the insistence on recovering the Golan; (2) Stop the clamor about the division of Jerusalem; (3) Disarm the Palestinian "police".

Yasser Arafat as a negotiating partner. In this ill-advised process, foisted on Israel by world pressure and by its previous government, Israel has made far-reaching and existential sacrifices and concessions. It has yielded control of the Gaza Strip and of all major "West Bank" cities

to the Palestinian Authority and has agreed to detailed plans to grant further autonomy to the Palestinians. In what is probably the ultimate folly in this process, Israel has tolerated the formation of a Palestinian "police force" (actually an army) of 40,000 men—the largest police-to-population ratio in the world (!)—and has equipped this "police force" with a complete arsenal of automatic weapons. As the world now knows, these weapons were turned on Israeli soldiers and civilians at the very first opportunity that the Palestinian leaders provoked.

The Arab countries, not Israel, are killing peace in the Middle East. The PLO, apart from the bloody crimes that it has committed against Israel, has now established a virtual dictatorship in the territory allotted to it. In Egypt, thousands of Copts have been killed and their churches burned. President Assad of Syria has occupied Lebanon and has killed and tortured thousands. Iraq, under its dictator Saddam Hussein, is a rogue state attacking its neighbors and killing its own citizens. Saudi Arabia is a monarchical tyranny. Sudan is engaged in the systematic slaughter and enslavement of its black African people. How strange that nobody asks the Palestinians or any of the Arab states to bring any sacrifices for peace. Here are three good sacrifices that the Arabs could bring for peace: (1) Abandon the insistence on recovering the Golan; (2) Stop the clamor about the division of Jerusalem; (3) Disarm the Palestinian "police." Billy clubs are good enough for London Bobbies. Why should any more be needed to patrol Nablus, Hebron and Bethlehem?

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"Lawbreakers"

Each of 20 solution notes is followed by the clue word that should have been capitalized.

Across: 1. BROOKE + D; *Shields* 5. S(T)ERLING; *Rod* 10. KE(L) + LY; *Grace* 11. CH + AIRMAN 12. RED + LETTER; *Barber* 13. SE(P)DA; *Black* 14. M + ORGANS 16. A + S + PEN 18. S(P)OT + ARES; *Mars* 20. DEFILE + D 26. UNC + LOGS 28. AL + BUM'S; *Gore* 30. G(E)ORGE; *Bush* 31. DANTEAN (anag.) 32. VERSE (hidden); *Browning* 33. PI(G + SKIN'S 34. S(P)ROUTING (up or anag.); *Police* 35. RED + O 36. YARD + A + GE (rev.) 37. T + OLE + DAN; *Rather* Down: 1. FR(EEL)ANCE; *Nice* 2. O + L + DISH 3. LOLL + I + POP; *Temple* 4. KEATON (anag.); *Buster* 6. ORIENT (anag.); *Polo* 7. IMP ART (pun) 8. NA(I'VE)TE 9. G(N)ATS 14. MEDIUM (double def.) 15. REF + ACE 17. A + L(C)OVE 19. MA + D(IS)ON; *Yo-Yo* 21. MASTERSON (anag.); *Bat* 23. CAN + BERRA; *Yogi* 24. MA(RR + IE)D 25. CUR'S + OR 27. AG + END + A 28. S(LEE)PY; *Grumpy* 29. SANTA (hidden) 30. W + EASEL; *Constable*

ly a remarkable sensation. Every year young men and women graduate from college feeling like pioneers. "The Times, They Are A-Changin'" is an anthem for any age.

Horn recounts some dramatic stories that support her image of the times, but if you look for drama and unexpected metamorphoses in the lives of people in any group, you will find them. My experience at Smith College in the late 1960s leads me to believe that there were probably many members of the Wellesley class of '69 who were not especially rebellious (or politically engaged), including many women who went to graduate school and pursued careers that may not have been available to their mothers. By 1969 careerism was becoming a respectable choice for educated women. It's true that graduate and professional schools were not fully open to women until 1972, when Congress passed Title IX, the federal guarantee of equality in education. But Title IX was enacted precisely because social mores, and the expectations of female students, had changed.

The expectations of their parents had changed as well. In portraying members of the class of '69 as uniquely rebellious, Horn exaggerates the parental opposition they were likely to have encountered. In part she relies on the accounts of the women she interviewed, many of whom may have come from particularly traditional families; but they are not necessarily representative of their generation or class (we don't know whom Horn didn't interview), and their reports need to be balanced with more-objective analysis. Horn simply offers a few anecdotes about women who did not want their daughters attending Wellesley or who worried that too much education would make them unmarriageable; and she claims that these fears were confirmed by "the most estimable psychologists and doctors of the day," along with women's magazines: some warned that educated women were courting "spinsterhood and frigidity" and violating the laws of God and nature.

IT does sound familiar. Throughout much of our nation's history eminent doctors have made many stupid remarks about women. But by the late 1960s few people were listening. What Horn doesn't seem to realize is that when the class of '69 was coming of age, the doctors she

cites were already dinosaurs. (Her survey of medical opinion seems rather selective.) She greatly overstates popular resistance to educating women. She should have paid less attention to what the most regressive doctors and psychologists said and more attention to what people did.

By the 1960s middle-class families had been sending their daughters to college for decades. By 1970 close to half (41.9 percent) of all college students were women; close to a quarter (23.5 percent) of all women aged eighteen to twenty-four were in college. As the late historian of education Barbara Solomon observed, it was in the years from 1870 to 1920 that "the denigration of college as an option for women evaporated, and its desirability became established."

This is not to suggest that by 1920 women were expected to pursue careers, just like men: for many years most were expected to become educated mothers. But higher education for women had been normalized long before Hillary and her friends entered Wellesley, and by the time they graduated, careerism was becoming normalized as well. Naturally, some parents enthusiastically supported their daughters' decisions to pursue professions, and some did not. (The ones I've known have all taken pride in their daughters' accomplishments.) There was at least a general expectation that female students would graduate from college: in 1969 at a Seven Sisters school an unintended pregnancy or a decision to drop out and marry had considerably more shock value than a determination to attend law school.

Throughout this book Horn relies on oppositional images of the 1950s and 1960s that are only partly accurate. In portraying the class of '69 as rebellious, freedom-seeking proto-feminists, she paints a monolithic view of their mothers as victims of the feminine mystique, oppressed by femininity, "frustrated and suffocated." Again, she is apparently relying on the unexamined recollections of those women who consented to be interviewed. "When the women of Hillary's class describe their mothers, they return again and again to images of confinement and suffocation," Horn reports. She concludes that women who graduated from Wellesley in 1969 were "the daughters of martyrs."

That is melodrama, not social history. It is no defense of the 1950s to point out that many intelligent, educated women successfully adapted to the decade's restrictions and led at least satisfactory lives, not devoid of pleasure. Some found outlets for their energy and talents in local politics, community work, the arts, or family life. Some held wage-paying jobs. When I remember my mother and her friends in the fifties and sixties, or the mothers of my college classmates, and when I think about the women of their generation with whom I have worked, or those whom I've interviewed in the course of my work, I see a diverse group of women, with the usual range of problems and pleasures. Of course they had their share of sorrows, but it's not as if they never laughed.

Horn might counter that they did not laugh out loud or in public. In her simplistic view, they lived behind closed doors, which their daughters opened as they absorbed the lessons of their culture: feminism taught them to politicize the personal sphere, and popular therapies cautioned against keeping secrets.

Horn sensibly concludes that the conflation of private and public spheres has "had complicated and mixed effects" on the class of '69. Sometimes they "get caught in the therapeutic trap, letting talk substitute for action," she declares—a bit

churlishly, since she has depended so completely on their willingness to talk. (When you interview women for publication and persuade them to confide in you, you waive the right to criticize them for "jeopardizing their own dignity" by "say[ing] too much.") But Horn also attributes considerable progress to the dissolution of traditional boundaries between private and public. Bringing politics into the home and the demands of family life into the workplace, the class of '69 helped to improve personal and professional life for women, she suggests. Its members also formed "enduring alliances" with one another.

These are reasonable but unremarkable observations that could probably have been made about women who graduated from Vassar or the University of Wisconsin in 1969. If Hillary Clinton had not graduated from Wellesley in '69, this book would never have been written, and that is its central irony. This story of feminist progress is driven by a regressive fascination with celebrity. It reflects a rather childlike desire for a charismatic personality who can symbolize and simplify a complex of social changes. If one goal of feminism was to dismantle stereotypes of femininity, for the sake of individualizing and humanizing women, then the erection of female icons is a sign of its failures. ♣

BRIEF REVIEWS



44: Dublin Made Me

by Peter Sheridan.

Viking, 288 pages, \$24.95.

Mr. Sheridan, now a distinguished theater director, grew up in Dublin, a city seemingly populated entirely by eccentrics. Some of them "lodged" in the Sheridan house, where young Peter's know-it-all father provoked discussions that sometimes advanced from philosophy to violence. Order was restored when

Mrs. Sheridan threatened to "put my hat and coat on." As the 1960s progressed, the family acquired a television and a washing machine. Neither worked well, and Sheridan senior's do-it-yourself principles made little improvement. The author and his siblings survived a dreadful clerical schoolmaster, a passion for the Beatles, and the juvenile equivalent of a jailbreak. They lost a little brother. Mr. Sheridan describes this noisy, devoted, bright, and funny clan with great af-

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fection and a fine sense of timing, as the boy that he was develops awareness of the world, of music, of sex, and of the very real capabilities of his father. All the book's characters grow and become more complicated, as people do in real life, but few real-life observers record the process with the understanding and high spirits of Mr. Sheridan.

The Unstrung Harp

by Edward Gorey.

Harcourt Brace, 64 pages,
\$15.00.

TUH has been reissued for the titillation of a new generation of Gorey devotees. It depicts "the unspeakable horror of the literary life," as experienced by Mr. Earbrass "of Hobbies Odd, near Collapsed Pudding in Mortshire," with a practicality unusual for Mr. Gorey. There are no hints of obscene perversities and only one hallucination. Mr. Gorey's idiosyncratic, inexplicably sinister illustrations are another matter.

Jonathan Swift

by Victoria Glendinning.

Holt, 336 pages, \$35.00.

A biographer of Swift does not suffer from want of material. Swift's works, his voluminous correspondence, and his contemporaries document him thoroughly. The problems are to account for the clergyman, the Tory propagandist, the satirist, the philanthropist, and the patriot without committing three volumes, and to avoid rash speculation about a subject who remains stubbornly enigmatic. Ms. Glendinning, an accomplished biographer, deftly avoids both pitfalls. She gives little space to Swift's Tory polemics on the grounds that they were based on ambition (he longed to be an English bishop) rather than political conviction. The friendships with party authorities were, however, as genuine as those with literary figures like Pope and Gay, for they endured after the Tory regime collapsed in scandal and once-powerful men could get Swift no more than an appointment as Dean of Saint Patrick's in Dublin. Swift frankly hated Ireland, but once there, he became a fiercely eloquent advocate of fair and decent treatment of the island and is revered as the father of Irish independence. He was responsi-

ble for the establishment of a mental hospital that still exists. He never married, and Ms. Glendinning is impartial in dealing with the theories that have been put forward to account for his long, inconclusive relationships with Stella (Esther Johnson) and Vanessa (Hester Vanhomrigh). Incest, class distinctions, latent homosexuality, and money have all been proposed. The author considers the evidence for each, finds all of it both plausible and implausible, and settles for Swift's "screwed up" attitude toward women. A biographer who can resist the opportunity for elaborate sexual guesswork should be much admired.

Elementals

by A. S. Byatt.

Random House, 240 pages,
\$21.95.

Ms. Byatt's "Stories of Fire and Ice" have a delightful fairy-tale quality, reinforced by her extraordinary skill in creating leisurely, luxurious visual images. The effect is deceptive, because the tales are metaphors for recognizable situations. (But are not fairy tales that to begin with?) Whether the author's basic subject is art, or grief, or the generation gap, it emerges from subtle disguise—except when it sneaks up and pounces. In either case, the reader can enjoy surprise as well as pleasure.

Trout and Salmon

photographs by R. Valentine Atkinson,
foreword by Nick Lyons.

Lyons Press, 176 pages, \$39.95.

"If you want to be happy for one hour, get drunk. If you want to be happy for three days, get married. . . . If you want to be happy forever, learn to fish." The catch to that advice (source unknown) is that there are times when fishing is impossible. This collection of fishing memoirs, by anglers recent and past, offers relief for the hopelessly offstream. Mr. Atkinson's photographs are superb. The authors are veteran experts and bungling novices, casting from Alaska to Chile to Iceland to Russia and at points between. There is a quotation from "the great fly-fisherman G.E.M. Skues" that may explain the fervor of anglers to the unenlightened.

—Phoebe-Lou Adams



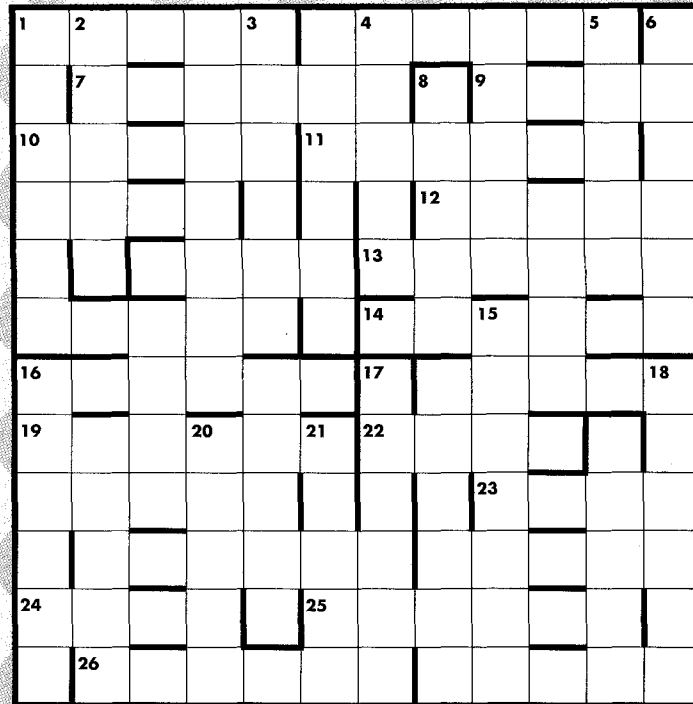
THE PUZZLER

by Emily Cox and Henry Rathvon

Mismatches

Each of the nine "Mismatches" clues consists of *definitions only* for two randomly paired words. With a little help, these words can be matched up with their proper partners for entry in the grid. Solvers will need to add a single letter to each of the defined clue answers and then find the pairs of newly formed words that intersect on the added letters. When all nine pairings have been correctly placed in the diagram, their crossing letters may be read from left to right, column by column, to show what unites them. "Mismatches" clue answers include one proper noun. All other entries, which are clued normally, include three capitalized words.

The solution to last month's Puzzler appears on page 136.



Across

1. Hurts half of mismatches with remixing (5)
7. Corner on the outskirts of a large Irish town (6)
9. Total zero in wrestling (4)
10. Loudly announce opening of laundry in nude (5)
11. Managed church and old western farm (6)
12. Social group's time taken up by legal action (5)
13. Taking two pieces of beef from the middle, rotate serving dish (6)
14. A lark's flying around enclosures in South Africa (6)
16. Lady had a salary of about a thousand (6)
19. A simple vessel carrying a Middle Eastern personage (6)
22. Assistance holding C sharp (4)

23. Start to cry and come apart (4)
24. Take in container of coffee for audition (4)
25. Grieving figures caress while going around island (6)
26. Bill's eating hot snacks (6)

Down

1. In the greatest part of *Moby Dick*'s beginning, be attacked en masse (6)
2. Finally, abridged book of maps (5)
3. Hammer transportation in the Yukon (6)
4. Show opposition busted crate (5)
5. Overdramatize retracting error, in my opinion (5)
6. Reminders of fine found in some bills (6)
8. Bring on popular scoundrel (5)

15. Cause a stir with that item in small print (7)
16. Arrangement of Harlem composer (6)
17. Insect is riding on the back of male colony member (6)
18. Trains water on small branches (6)
20. Bogs containing river plants with no flowers (5)
21. Figure of speech used in metro periodical (5)

Mismatches

- a. Wizard was sore
- b. Studies melody
- c. Ocean harbor
- d. Domesticated horse
- e. Mother gets older
- f. Have a meal at one's residence
- g. Swiss city slang
- h. Leave a mark on platform
- i. Nightclub job as a performer

Note: The instructions above are for this month's puzzle only. It is assumed that you know how to decipher clues. For a complete introduction to clue-solving, send an addressed, stamped long envelope to The Atlantic Puzzler, 77 North Washington Street, Boston, Mass. 02114.

WORD IMPROVISATION

by J. E. Lighter

Cats Out of the Bag

PALEONTOLOGISTS in Florida recently announced the discovery of a new species of saber-toothed cat—the third such cat known to have lived in North America. The cat in question, unearthed from a sink-hole, is a million-year-old specimen that was built like a bear and was capable of reducing wild peccaries (among whose fossilized bones it was found) to Meow Mix *quicker'n scat*, as old-timers might put it. The new species does not yet have a name. Some might be disposed to regard it as a *wampus cat*, a hitherto fanciful member of the wildcat clan, to which campers attribute mysterious nocturnal growls and thuds. The inspiration for *wampus cat* seems to be *catawampus*, an old term for a remarkable or unruly individual, and, strange to say, originally an adverb similar in meaning to *cat-ty-* (or *kitty-* or *cater-*) *cornered*.

Unlike their prehistoric cousins, the cats that prowl the savannas of slang are pretty well domesticated. The metaphor-minded may find it curious that slangy cat imagery has come into its own only during the past hundred years or so. "*Suffering cats!*" exclaims a character in *Shakespeare in Love*, anachronistically employing a twentieth-century interjectory phrase more usual in the form of *Holy cats!* or even *Catfish!* Seventeenth-century slangsters did refer to prostitutes as *cats*—hence *cat-house*, "a brothel." *Raining cats and dogs* (originally *dogs and polecats*) dates from several decades later. This expression has prompted some far-fetched explanatory scenarios, including the idea that torrential rains used to send lots of dead animals floating down the gutters of London. No one really knows the expression's origin.

The same holds true for *cat* itself; it may derive from an untrackable Indo-European word that wound up in post-classical Latin

as *cattus* (which also referred to weasels and stoats). Cicero and Caesar, of course, used the better-established *feles* (or *felis*). *Scat!* has lexicographers more or less stumped. The cunning suggestion that it comes from a peremptory *Ssss! Cat!* has garnered fer-

fearsome or to something impressively appealing; hence the various high school and college teams around the country called the *Bearcats*. And don't forget the *Stutz Bearcat*, the classic motorcar first built in 1911 by Harry Stutz's Ideal Motor Car Company, of

Indianapolis. Arguably America's most highly prized sports car, the rakish *Bearcat* bore the incidental distinction of being one of the last American-built automobiles to mount the steering wheel on the right.

Specialists who try to reconstruct the unwritten predecessors of English (and related languages) report that the modern *bear* ultimately originated as a Germanic euphemism meaning simply "the brown one," presumably on the speak-of-the-devil principle. As many people are aware, the *teddy bear* was named commercially in honor of a black bear that was spared by President Teddy Roosevelt on a disappointing hunting expedition in Mississippi in 1902. *Teddy bear* now also designates a gruff but soft-hearted, lovable, maybe even easily manipulated person, generally a man—in other words, a real *pussycat*.

In the early 1920s America's youth decided that anything great or gratifying was *the cat's meow*—or *the cat's pajamas* or even *the*

bee's knees, phrases you can still hear on occasion. *Cat* meaning "a jazz man" or "any man" soon began to creep into jazz lingo—introduced, they say, by the trumpeter and New Orleans native Louis Armstrong. It was combined with *hep* (or *hip*) to produce *hepcat* in the 1930s. There are romantics who hope that *hepcat* will turn out to be derived from the word *hipikat*, in the West African language Wolof; *hipikat* means, roughly, "eyes open." The likelihood that such a linguistic kinship exists, however, is vanishingly small.



*Investigations of slang
by the editor of the
Random House Historical Dictionary
of American Slang*

vent adherents but stands on little evidence.

As noted, Florida's saber-toothed cat has been likened to a bear in build. As it happens, the word *bearcat* sprang to life as a popular name for neither a bear nor a cat but for the red panda. By 1910 it had become a slang reference to somebody energetic or

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